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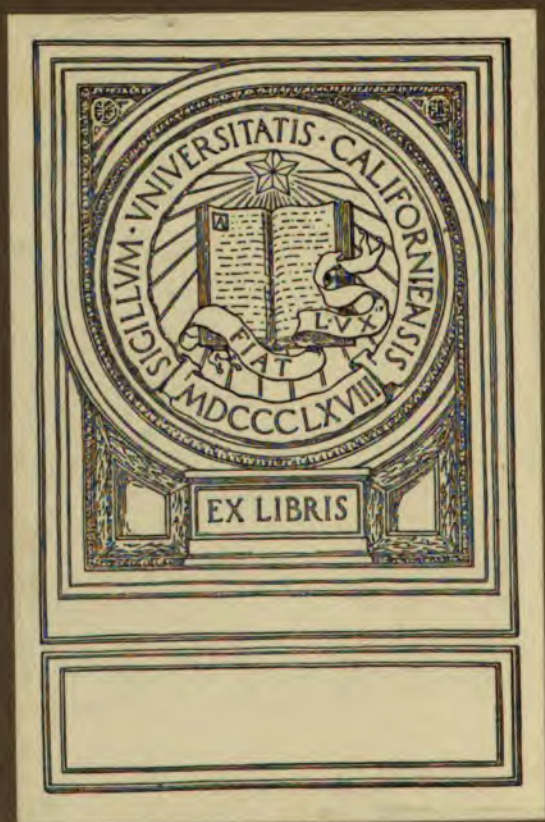
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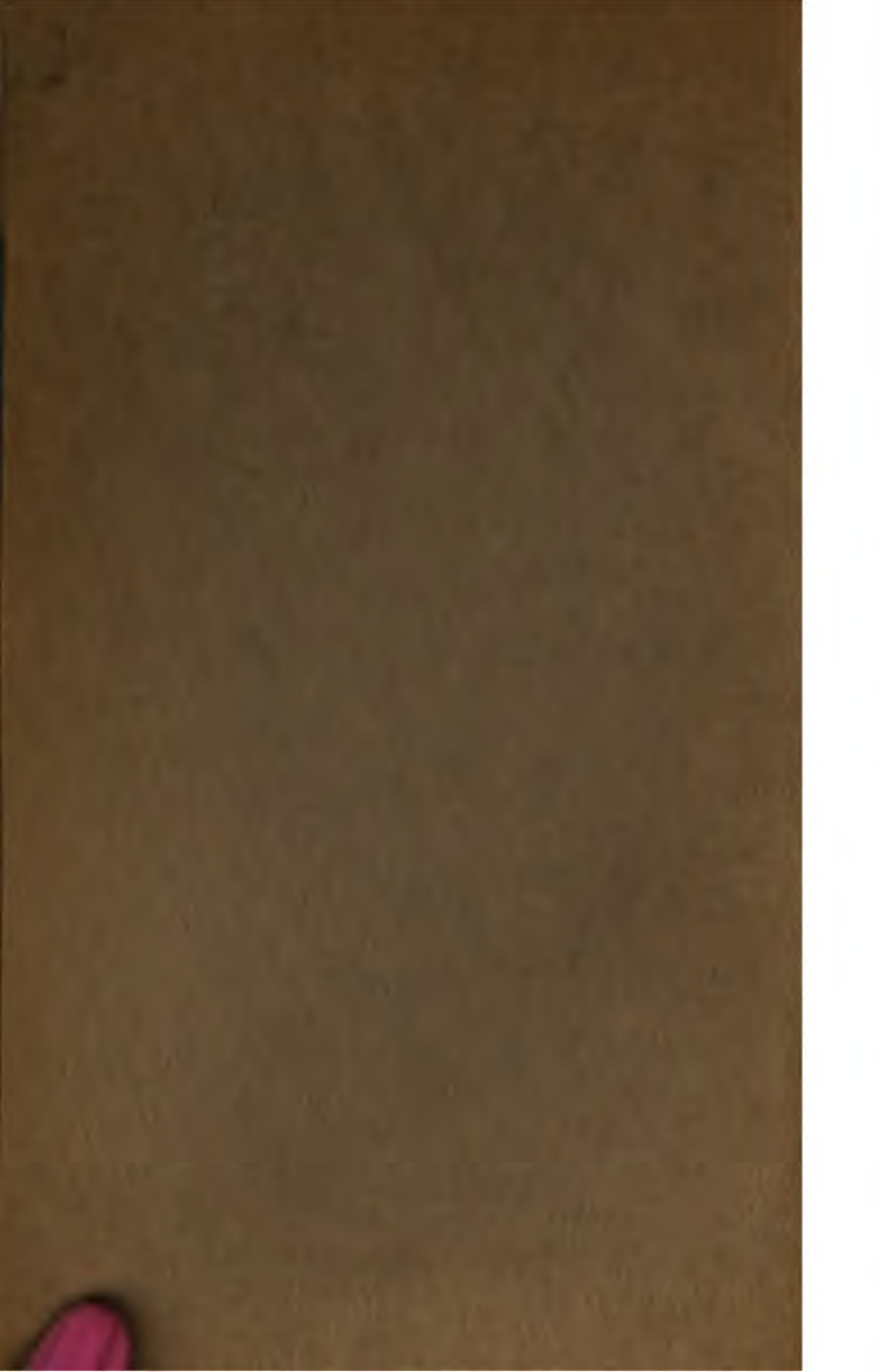
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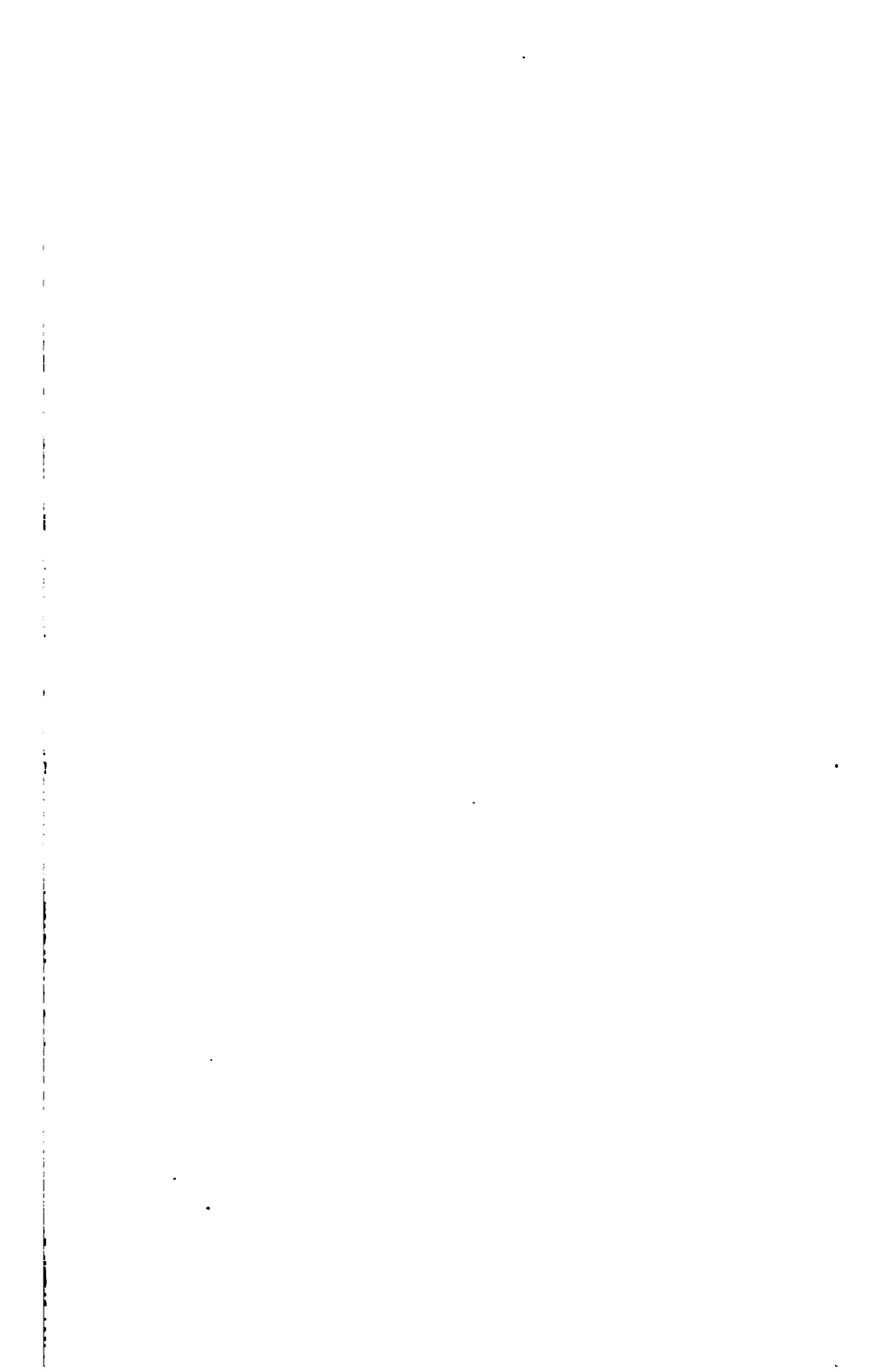
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# **·RURAL versus URBAN**

## **THEIR CONFLICT AND ITS CAUSES·**

### **A STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS AF- FECTING THEIR NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL RELATIONS**

**By**  
**JOHN W. BOOKWALTER**

Author of  
"Siberia and Central Asia," etc.

*Author of*  
*Life of*

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**To**  
**TAYLOR HATFIELD**

The efforts of whose impartial mind have ever been directed to an earnest search for truth, and whose long and steadfast friendship has brightened the pathway of my life, this volume is affectionately dedicated by

**THE AUTHOR**



## PREFACE

THE subject-matter of this volume was originally contained in a series of letters written somewhat hastily by the author, in the spring of the present year, while on a health-seeking tour of the Mediterranean region, and while contemplating the tragic history of the many great nations that once flourished there. They were subsequently published in a local paper in Springfield, Ohio, and received considerable attention.

It may perhaps be needless to say that they were written under the disabilities of ill-health, and also under the embarrassments of insufficient data and statistical matter relating to the several subjects considered, which were not readily obtainable.

It might be further added that such statistical matter as relates to the United States being necessarily confined to a range fixed by the twelfth, or last (1900), census of the government, that pertaining to other countries was made to conform as far as possible therewith, in order that all comparisons might be on a full and equal basis.

Having been frequently solicited to put these letters into a more compact, permanent, and durable form, I have at last concluded to yield to this oft-repeated request. In thus submitting them, however, to the judgment and candor of the public, I do so with the feeling that my labors will be fully justified and amply rewarded if they in any measure contribute to even a partial solution of the many perplexing problems that, in common with other nations, now beset this great country.

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

*December 14, 1910*

*Economist*

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## Rural versus Urban

*Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;  
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade,  
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.*

GOLDSMITH.





# I

## THE PRINCIPLE OF ORGANIC LIFE

SAN REMO, ITALY, April 30, 1910.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Along with others, your attention has doubtless been engaged by the fierce budgetary warfare that is almost everywhere being waged among the nations, with its portents of possible serious social, economic, and political disorders. The fact that it exists similarly in many nations widely divergent in racial characteristics, customs, age, and traditions suggests an identity of fundamental cause or causes, such as to awaken the liveliest apprehensions in the minds of all who view with serious concern the welfare of their own country, and the integrity of its governmental institutions.

We will not lay a needless levy upon your time and attention by the labored effort to deduce from the complex and involved factors of modern civic and political intricacies any governing principle

in their varied relations, or seek to extract from their confused interactions, as a whole, any effect that might be regarded as a necessary consequence of them. It is sufficient to our present purpose to point out the general truth that nations in their organic capacity, in respect of the essential relation of their constituent parts, are like all other organic bodies, and especially those of a corporeal nature.

The principle of organic life is in the just correlation of integrant parts, severally having a due and full exercise of their special and appropriate functions. If there be a word possessed of such force and value as to sufficiently express a supreme and universal law, is not that word *harmony*? Wherefore, as it has been said, is not harmony the abode of virtue and discord that of vice? As in the state of harmony there dwells perpetuity, stability, and happiness, so in disorder there lies instability, confusion, and unhappiness. What, in very essence, is harmony other than the attuned relation of distinct parts forming a complete whole? It being of the nature of harmony that it is more fully attained in the order wherein the fewest related parts exist, and in a lessening degree in correspondence with a greater multiplicity of such parts, it is therefore not in the more complex

and involved, but in the more simple and uniform conditions of existence, considered as a whole, that the fullest and most permanent state of prosperity, contentment, and happiness can be realized.

It thus logically follows that when any discordant action arises among the component parts of an organic body, that special form at once ceases to exist and has, in fact, already become another and different organic entity. A derangement, therefore, in the equilibrated action of the integral parts destroying that just relation upon which the integrity of an organism depends, may properly be regarded as in the nature of a malady existing within it.

In that corrective and conserving principle everywhere manifest in nature's laws, this inharmony may in time be removed and the original healthy state or condition may ultimately be re-established, by restoring that accordant action between the vital concurring members indispensable in a stable and cohering whole. Should this disturbed relation of primary members indefinitely persist, one of two results must inevitably ensue: either the final disintegration of the constituent parts of the original body, or a radical readjustment of them, creating thereby a new and different organic structure.

It will be obvious that all organisms, in virtue of the conditions under which they exist, tend towards new forms; since the most perfect, constant, and uniform interaction of their essential parts is impossible, as each is affected by the infinitely varied and involved influences existing extraneous to and impressing the environed body. It is, however, only when these outward forces, in part or measurably as a whole, flow suddenly, so to say, with an excess in time and effect upon the environed organism that there arises a permanent derangement of its internal order, such as to seriously endanger the long existing relation among its members, which constituted in essence its very existence. Have we not all in our own personal experience become, to our pain and sorrow, a subjective verification of the evil effects wrought within ourselves by sudden change, through like external changes operating upon the body? From this we believe it is a fair inference, that all organic bodies of whatever character are vitally endangered by sudden changes, whether arising from internal or external sources.

Why violent action is inimical to a sound and stable status of a body remains a mystery to be solved. We all know that a swiftly moving body, by gentle and gradual resistance, can be brought

to rest without serious internal or external effects, while to suddenly arrest its motion, the gravest commotion will follow as a consequence. Conversely, it follows that the same results would ensue by an inverse application of an impelling force to a body in repose sufficient to abruptly impart to it a high velocity; and such derangement of its parts would be in direct correspondence with the violence of the impelling power and the rapidity of motion produced. In both cases assumed, the resultant effect would vary, as that of the volume and suddenness of applied forces, from that of a transient, unimportant one to a total change in their structural form.

Nor in this case do the modern concepts of dynamics, which teaches us that by the persistence of force the motion of the mass is converted into the equivalent of atomic motion, advance us appreciably towards a final concept as to what "heat," "motion," or "matter" is in essence. To this end the refined speculations of the disciples of Jules and Faraday bring us no nearer the ultimate truth than the crude generalizations of the Eleatic or Lucretian philosopher. Before the true nature of a vacuum became known, the early philosopher was content to find an explanation of that familiar phenomenon in the vague and insufficient formula

that "nature abhors a vacuum." In like manner, we may be content for a space to accept, as a solution of a cognate mystery, the equally incomplete explanation that nature abhors a sudden change, until a more fundamental concept is deduced from her laws.

Yet there will still remain the conspicuous fact that in sudden changes there lies sure danger, and to a degree varying with their violence. We may venture to affirm that a solution may be found in the principle of organic life we have enunciated, since the effect noted is not of a substantive, but purely of a relative nature; and it is thus that virtue lies in order and vice in confusion.

It must here be particularly noted, that it is bodies of a volitive nature that most of all are subject to a serious disturbance in the harmony of their composite parts, which we have seen is essential to its life. It is evident that in self-force, or will, there lies the power within the organism itself to create a change in the correlated action of its constituent parts, and this, too, in a large measure independent of extraneous causes and forces, upon which its existence is in a manner remotely dependent. In other words, such organic bodies are self-endowed with a power to create within themselves relations of their in-

tegral members, such as are quite distinct from those that are the consequent result of causes affecting these organisms not of a volitive character, and the continued existence of which is a necessity growing out of the confluent action of natural laws. It is manifest, therefore, that all bodies of the former character inherently contain the power within themselves to determine those vital relations of their various members, such as will be productive of either their good or injury.

While those elements and forces which in their varied categories of social, financial, economic, and governmental life of a nation are not of a tangible or corporeal nature, they nevertheless constitute, in the aggregate of their relations, quite as definite an organic whole as those of a purely concrete character. Moreover, partaking of their fundamental characteristics, the integrity of its life is in like manner equally dependent upon maintaining a just correlation of its composite parts.

Of all the forces and factors that go to constitute an organic national entity, the law-making power is far the most potent to change the relation of its integrant members. It can even dissolve a long and well-adjusted status of what may seem by nature firmly correlated parts, and create a new alignment of them. Herein we can discover the



origin of that conflict that has ever subsisted between the laws of nature and the laws of man, and who can doubt what the ultimate issue of such a contest must ever be? The law-making power, therefore, possesses that most dangerous capacity which, through a sudden disturbing influence, can unsettle a long and well-adjusted relation of national forces, established by the continuous and equable operation of natural laws. Thus the law-creating force in the intangible organism called the state stands, as respects the power to disturb and reconstitute a new order of its related members, in the same relation as the volitive power in vital concrete bodies bears to their related parts. Having, therefore, an influence so all-pervading and in nature even self-destructive in its effects, how necessary does it become that it should be wielded under the truest and best guidance of the mind and heart.

Alas, how often it is otherwise, prejudice blinding the one, and selfishness deadening the other! As the maintenance of a healthy action and the preservation of an organic body wholly depend upon the accordant relation of its parts, it becomes the prime duty and concern of all to see that, under specious forms, there may not insidiously enter the germs of discord and disease with their de-

ranging effects. However sincere the desire or earnest the effort, the fallible and limited powers of man to forecast final results from present conditions and causes often commit him to acts the ultimate consequences of which find neither the endorsement of his reason, nor receive the approval of his conscience. This, of necessity, must be so, since in the operations of human laws in their larger forms and wider scope even an ultimate, fatal inharmony of national forces may be obscured. Their final effects being remote, he is often betrayed, by the trend of immediate and transient causes and effects, into an erroneous view as to their real nature and ultimate effects, which can be clearly discerned only in the sum of their distant consequences and results.

In the legislative realm of the state, it therefore becomes the highest duty of the statesman and lawgiver to safeguard each and every interest of the people against a possible existence in the laws that regulate and control them, of any principle that may tend to create an unbalanced and unjust relation among them. It must be evident, that no matter what may seem to be the beneficent effects of a law, when viewed in the light of their immediate or proximate results, there nevertheless may be contained in its very spirit a subtle

virus that may work, in the end, an unjust and fatal inharmony among the varied interests influenced by it.

No form of legislation can work more directly, or with more fatal effect, upon the indispensable accord of the cardinal productive forces of a nation than through those laws which, in their spirit, serve to create an abnormal condition of one or more of them; and as a consequence cause a like abnormal state also of the others, as respects the whole. It is possible to enact laws that, in virtue of their own proper action, one industrial factor may thereby be inordinately enhanced through the correlative injury of another. Such an unbalanced state of a nation's economic forces is compatible neither with a true prosperity, nor with its permanence as an organic body.

It is by sudden and drastic changes, wrought through a law in an existing status, to which can often be ascribed greater evil effects than those due to the intrinsic character of the law itself. Thus a measure salutary in nature may in itself produce evil results through its immoderate and inopportune action in point of time and extent, defeating its own proper purpose by engendering a hopeless confusion and aggravating the very disorder that it might otherwise have ameliorated.

Hence the effort of laws, essentially just, to relieve and correct a partial state of disorder may thus create that of a complete chaos, an immeasurable evil; since any condition, however imperfect, is to be preferred to a chaotic one.

Again we find an analogy in the human body, as revealed in the immoderate use of remedies, themselves possessed of inherent virtues. Instead of removing the specific and transient condition of the body called disease (a capacity that lay in their moderate and judicious use), through an excess of remedial influences, inherently good, the whole system is often thrown into a permanent state of disorder. It may with much reason, therefore, be affirmed as a general truth that a principle, innately good, when inconsiderately applied as a corrective force may neutralize or destroy even the virtue it contains.

In the enactment of measures of a reformatory character, in order that they may fully attain their specific object and purpose, is it not even more essential to consider the manner of their application to the evil to be corrected than the virtues that are to be embodied in them?

Should we, therefore, discover in a social or economic body an inharmony of relation and unequal action among its component members, is not the

inference a true one, that it is the effect of human laws, either vicious in their intrinsic nature, or of just ones intemperately applied? This of necessity must be true, for we find that in the conspiracy of nature's laws they are never other than of an accordant character and action, having no essential tendency to produce a state of inharmony.

Therefore, does it not follow that an organic body, thus deranged in its integral parts, can be restored to a normal state of equilibrium only through eliminating the vicious influence of human laws, due either to their intrinsic quality, or to the intemperate application of those of a salutary character, thus permitting the undisturbed, free, and full play of those of nature only?

In the derangement of a nation's affairs through a conflict of man and nature, an ultimate readjustment through natural causes being inevitable, is it not the part of wisdom to join in willing accord our own efforts with those of nature's inexorable methods, and by gentle regressive action restore harmony, thereby averting the violent shock that would otherwise be the necessary result of nature's own readjusting processes were we to persist in an attitude of opposition to them?

At this point we desire to crave your indulgence

for what may seem an abrupt and wide digression, which we believe you will the more freely accord, when you discover that it stands in an inseparable relation to matters that it is our purpose to elaborate further on.

## II

### HILL CITIES

THOSE who have extensively travelled, especially in the rural portions of Italy, cannot fail to be impressed by a marked characteristic of the country, almost from the Alps to the extreme southern part of the peninsula. Everywhere one sees rising some symmetrical hill, often of pyramidal form, the crest of which is crowned by a village or city in a more or less perfect condition, giving a charming setting to the entire picturesque countryside of this delightful peninsula. This constitutes such a general peculiarity through the entire country as to cause the impression that it may once have been a dominant and prevailing characteristic, having for its origin some fundamental cause arising out of the varied wants of the early inhabitants that occupied the mountains and valleys of ancient Italy.

On closer study, one can discern visible purpose and design in what at first view seemed merely casual or fortuitous. Two special features mark

the wide distribution of these hill cities. They are usually located on an eminence of commanding position and altitude, and of steepest acclivity, and always on the limited space of some sheer rock that may chance to surmount the rugged summit. This would justify the inference that the location of these hill cities was primarily determined by defensive necessities. It can again be noted that with rare exceptions they are found in the vicinity of a more or less extended area of fertile land, and in greater frequency adjacent to the beautiful and rich valleys that traverse seaward with such charming effect throughout the entire peninsula. Moreover, there is sustained a close relation between the size and importance of the hill cities and the area of the available fertile lands they command.

In the state of mankind succeeding that wherein life is wholly sustained by the precarious fruits of the chase, the cultivation of land becomes their one sole pursuit.

As in virtue of diversity in climate and other physical conditions that prevail even in extreme forms throughout the globe, man in his most primitive state was necessarily distributed in a multitude of more or less dissimilar races, tribes, or groups; for it must be considered that it is the

2



influence of his environing, climatic, and other physical conditions that more than all else forms and shapes his specific ethnological character. We therefore find that differentiation of the human family into those special forms in direct correspondence with the degree, diversity, and extent of the peculiar surrounding physical influences under which he existed, and out of which he developed.

We are, therefore, warranted in the belief that in those countries possessed of greatest material diversity, there would, in the earlier and simpler state of man, develop by natural process a larger number of special groups than in those countries where there prevail more uniform and homogeneous climatic and general physical conditions.

Thus it is easy to understand that a homogeneous people, such as the Turanian, occupying even the small Grecian territory with its extreme variety in physical composition, would in process of time dissolve into variant sections in harmony with the many local diversities, and assume special characteristics, which, while not widely dissimilar to the parent stock, were sufficiently discordant to cause an irreconcilable animosity and perpetual warfare long witnessed among the many Greek states that developed from a common progenitor.

In like manner, we can see how even a larger number of variant races and tribes might arise from some parent race, be it Siculi, Oscan, or Sabellian, that, as a common ancestor, may have occupied and peopled the larger and more diversified country of ancient Italy.

In considering the primitive agricultural state of man, it would be pleasant to contemplate it as one wherein each tiller of the soil, comprised in the race or tribe, dwelt in peace and undisturbed security upon the land he cultivated and which he was permitted to call his own. But when we reflect upon the many selfish passions that too often awaken the energies, control the mind, and debase the heart of man, we must recognize that this pleasing Arcadia becomes not only the merest Utopia, but essentially impossible.

Among the many ennobling qualities of heart and mind that endow the natural man and make for a higher, purer, and happier state, and by the exercise of which he gains strength, we find side by side also those of equal worth that, in their unguarded exercise and indulgence, tend towards a progressive degeneracy and a more enthralling mercenary spirit, thwarting in a measure our sweeter impulses and higher aspirations. The natural desire to acquire and accumulate, wisely

implanted in us as a means of self-preservation, when duly directed and controlled, is the most powerful stimulus given to man for the furtherance of his well-being, as well as an incentive to promote his true welfare and progress. When given unrestrained indulgence, it steadily ripens into an enthralling avarice and greed, that withers the heart and corrodes the soul.

This innate tendency towards the perversion of a necessary and useful trait of our nature is manifest from the savage with his needless store of wampum to the civilized millionaire with his surplus of weighted wealth; and from the child with its well-stuffed pockets, filled with a shining though worthless hoard, to the money-maddened Croesus with his gorged lockers of burdensome wealth. Thus what is salutary in its influence when wisely limited and controlled, when relieved from prudent restraint develops into even a predatory nature, which in its last degeneracy impels to deeds of violence and conquest, to satiate what has become a ruling passion. Everywhere this is disclosed in the efforts of the individual for personal gain at the expense and at times ruin of another, and of nations to wrest through violence of war the coveted wealth of their neighbors.

The most powerful impulse, no doubt, that

moves a people is the desire to possess themselves of fertile lands. Nor can this be a cause for wonder, since it is the basic necessity of mankind. Moreover, in this vast and noble resource—*the greatest possessed by man*—there lies not only the potentiality of gratifying all his necessary wants and desires, but also, if need be, all forms of avarice and greed that may serve in a measure to appease this insatiate and sordid mania.

Despite all the claims of a possible attainment otherwise, to a general state of higher culture, luxury, and ease, it remains a stubborn fact that all the necessities and desires of civilized mankind depend primarily for their supply and gratification upon the rather prosaic labor and energy directed to the soil, which of necessity must ever engage the far largest portion of the people. No matter how we may yearn for, or how needful we may deem to be, a higher culture and refinement for our happiness, we must face the commonplace fact that we have first to provide the means for our bodily wants and existence before we can consider the manner of it. As at present conditioned, man seems hopelessly fated to meet this prime necessity only by his unsentimental efforts and labor to wrest this means from the soil. It is upon this that all human activities directly

rest. I believe you will agree with me that it is first in order that we create and preserve our senses before we consider the matter of gratifying them, for in their true order does not the demand of necessities come before that of luxuries?

Unfortunately, the human race has no further arrived than yet to vulgarly and laboriously extract from the land the coarse equivalent of sentiment and culture, and it is thus that the man behind the counter in a city bazaar is not the man of prime importance, for he is preceded by the man behind the hoe in the country. Is it not evident, therefore, that the butcher and the baker are in advance of the artist and the tailor?

The important areas of fertile lands in the valleys and on the mountain-sides were no doubt in primitive times the attractive force that drew the early races thither. Doubtless, in due time, by a natural process of segregation, these lands fell under the control of more or less defined groups, and possibly fragments of an anterior disintegrated race. In a congeries of resultant and contiguous tribes, widely extended, marked by dissimilar traits, a common racial affinity no longer exercising a pacific influence, each tribe, moved by a common and mutual avarice or a spirit of

adventure, was ever ready to encroach upon the territory of another.

Thus, throughout this vast mosaic of militant tribes and races that covered Italy in early—even prehistoric—times, there existed a continuous state of suspended hostilities. Indeed, such accounts as have descended to us through the obscure medium of fable, legend, and tradition, of the early tribes that spread over Italy, are but records of incessant warfare among them. These communities or tribes arising spontaneously, or dissolved from whatever cause from a parent stock, adopted forms of government singularly similar in character further suggesting a remote and identical origin. They were aristocratic, often republican, and rarely of a kingly nature. The favorite form was to entrust the functions of government to a select council of elders, probably drawn from the body of the tribe, for age, wisdom, or experience, or perhaps for superior martial ability, so essential and justly admired among all primitive races.

The ingrained, aggressive spirit of all early agricultural and pastoral peoples, ever stimulated by either an internal pressure of population or a desire to encroach upon near neighbors, or, as often occurred, a mere spirit of adventure and

conquest, put upon them alike the necessity of a thorough defence against their mutual tendencies to violate their respective rights. As the most desirable and fertile lands lie in the valleys, and the less valued on the forest-covered hill and mountainside, it was therefore in the valleys that lay the point of contact and scenes of conflict that ever existed between them, and in which their predatory warfare was mostly maintained and confined.

In the issue of a battle, however decisive or complete, there is left in the defeated party an unconquered remnant, which seeks in flight some haven of safety. Out of this possible necessity there grew the fortified hill-tops, the remains of which even to this day constitute for the traveller an attraction in rural Italy. It formed at once the most natural and effective protection not only of a defeated army, but also of the agricultural laborers that were driven from their fields by the invading enemy.

In this protective ægis of the cities over agriculture in early times, might not we trace the rudiments of that patronizing and protective air so often assumed in these days by the inhabitants of the cities towards those of the country?

How effective was this defence of even an in-

significant community is shown by the fact that the great Hannibal, invincible on the plains of Italy, was forced to abandon his efforts against the little town of Foligno, secure within her protective walls upon the summit of a commanding hill. The city of Capua provides another notable instance of, or rather the want of, this protective power. It was located in the plains and was the capital of Campania, one of the most extensive and fertile sections of Italy. Possessed of much wealth and many resources, it fell an easy prey to the hardy mountaineers of Samnium, and later under the remorseless grasp of the Romans, who themselves were steadily repulsed for nearly two centuries by the same hill-dwelling Samnites.

Whatever may have been the original influences that caused the diffusion of the people throughout the limited area of lands occupied by them, there soon arose the necessity in peace, as well as in war, to provide ample means of security for the entire population against the many assaults and surprises from which they were ever in danger. No retreat could afford more complete protection than that of a summit of a ridge or hill enclosed within the compass of protecting walls. Thus it was that the apex of some chosen hill was encircled by a defending fortification or wall; and



such is the force of custom growing out of a once fundamental necessity, that even to this day it is common to see hill towns enclosed by walls, and occupied by all the tillers of the soil in the adjacent valley, to which they retire at nightfall, and which vaguely marks the limits of the land once occupied by some tribe or community long since extinct.

This ancient though natural mode of protecting the rights and securing the safety of a rural people is not confined to special nations, but seems to have spontaneously, as if by an inherent necessity, arisen in all countries where rural occupations were paramount. Nor does this essential need seem to be confined to a mountainous country, for it is a feature reflected in the less effectively protecting auls, or groups of tents, scattered throughout the wide plains of Tartary.

Everywhere in Scotland and in Ireland are noted the numerous remains of strong and ample castles that in ancient times supplied in sudden and extreme emergencies a safe, though temporary, retreat for the meagre population that under their shadow found some security in the cultivation of the narrow border of land in the valley below.

It was this presence of a perpetual menace and imminence of war that caused the primitive tribes

and races to divide their people into more or less defined classes, of the civil and military. The first was composed of all those incapable of bearing arms, and the second comprised all that were capable of rendering military service to the community. Yet in the early days of Rome, as well as in the other cities of Italy, this military class was not of an exclusive or fixed order, since the profession of arms was always joined with the pursuit of agriculture in times of peace, and it was usually in defence of their farms that in their earlier days they went to war.

This division of a nation into fixed orders of civil and military can arise from three causes only: where there has developed a spirit of adventure, conquest, and aggression; where there has grown up a permanent derangement of its internal, political, civil, and industrial forces; or, which is the more usual one, that of maintaining the security of an unduly extended circumference and border by an unwise expansion of the national domain against the assaults of circumjacent races.

It is an inherent necessity of a purely pastoral people that a separate military order be constantly maintained. The Tartar race was, perhaps, the most conspicuous example of this free distribution

of its people into well-defined and exclusive military and civil classes. The entire able-bodied element of the race was consigned to the sole profession of arms, and it was left to the remaining section of the people to provide for the wants of the whole nation, including the military class. Being left to the exclusive exercise of arms and the kindred amusements of the chase, the military element naturally developed such proficiency in all the essentials of war, as to make them the most formidable and invincible warriors the world has yet seen.

In the city of Rome, after the passing of her purely defensive stage, the continued internal and external necessities caused a gradual change in her military system, from that of a transient and unpaid peasant soldiery, subject to the call of a consul, to that of a paid and permanent one under the command of a general. This became an ever-increasing menace to the institutions and liberties of the commonwealth, and ultimately brought the empire.

While inquiry as to the number and population of the hill cities that were interspersed through the peninsula of Italy can bring but indefinite results from the slender historical data at command, it may, however, serve to form in some

measure a definite idea, not only as to the number of cities, but as to the life-sustaining capacity of agriculture throughout the peninsula at the beginning of the Roman era.

In the middle of the sixth century B.C., at the time of the *regifugium*, or banishment of the last of the kings, the territory of Latium comprised less than 2000 square miles, or about equal to the area of the State of Delaware, whose population at present is 180,000. With Latium and its confederated states and cities, Rome had formed a league under the last of her ruling kings.

Now in referring to the attempt to restore the exiled king, the ancient historian definitely says that the thirty Latium cities seceded from the league, declaring war upon Rome in furtherance of the attempt to restore Tarquin to his throne. This, it will be seen, gives something over sixty square miles of territory as an average to the cities of that country. Applying this standard, there must have been at that time in the Italian territory south of the Apennines from six to eight hundred cities of the size equal to those in Latium, whatever that may have been.

In this connection it must be considered that the Roman domain embraced the rich valley of the Tiber, the fairest portion of the region,

leaving as a residue the less fertile and more hilly portion of that territory.

As to the population of the respective cities of Latium, this must be left to inference drawn from the large armies she put into the field, and the long and stubborn resistance of her cities to the powerful assaults of Rome.

It must further be observed that at this time the states of this part of Italy had little, if any, foreign commerce or trade, and therefore for the support of their population they had to rely almost wholly on the products of domestic agriculture. Whatever their population may have been, there seems no good reason to believe that it was much inferior, if any, to that of the same territory to-day, or to that of any country of the same character that relies wholly upon its agriculture, and is not augmented by foreign intercourse and traffic.

In the division of labor and its products through the natural operation of internal productive forces in a community wholly agricultural and pastoral, such as existed in Italy at that or even pre-Roman times, though drawn together solely by protective necessities, the vastly greater part, as in nations of to-day, must be set down to the credit of its rural portion.

In the entire body of labor of the community of which the hill city was the centre, it may be assumed that there arose in due time such specialized forms in its total productive energies as would tend to yield the largest aggregate benefits to the whole body of the people. The articles necessary to the household and the operations in the field were no doubt produced by a small section of the labor of the cities, under the advantages of a rudely specialized adaptation of labor, together with that of the agriculturists themselves, in the intervals of leisure that often came to them from the many intermissions of their labor in the field.

Either or both of these productive methods insured the full and complete occupation of the time and energies of all the people, yielding the highest useful results of their collective labor. The full occupation of the whole community in useful pursuits preserved them against the tendency to vice that ever attends leisure and idleness, or a partially employed state, for it is truly said that it is idle hands that find evil things to do.

We are aware that you may reply that increased leisure gives increased opportunity for greater individual improvement and advancement. But are we really prepared, even in these times, to affirm that in the totality of leisure's benefits

secured by the quick methods and short cuts of modern civilization, there is not already a greater admixture of evil than of good? For is it a fact, that leisure is more occupied these days with what is useful and beneficial than what is useless and even injurious?

### III

#### AGRICULTURE IN ANCIENT AND MODERN ITALY

THIS natural division and distribution of labor in primitive communities, undisturbed by artificial aid and extraneous influences, by directing the larger portion of its energies to the soil, enabled them to sustain from the same area of land a greater number of people than now, where the more improved methods are employed with their by-product of useless leisure and idleness. This view is sustained by observation in Italy to-day, as everywhere one can discover the wondrous products of the husbandmen, both as to their quantity as well as quality. And this, too, upon lands that have been tilled for thirty centuries, and also without those aids which in our own country are regarded as indispensable to the highest and best culture. In Italy, one rarely hears the merry clatter of the reaper or sees the glint of a steel ploughshare, for the sickle and the scythe almost universally perform their ancient function, and the furrow is turned by much the same plough



made and used by the hand of the great Cincinnatus. Indeed, a not inconsiderable part of the land is even now turned by the spade or the two-pronged hoe of ancient usage; and quite the same methods are practised that were so well sung by Hesiod and Virgil. Nor do the highest results of husbandry, such as in skilled China and other countries where primitive methods are in vogue, seem compatible with the disuse of methods and appliances long and well tried, and that are so roundly decried by the disciples of modern progress and reckless change.

But, you may ask, what of the marvellous increase in the products of agriculture witnessed in the world in the last half-century; does it not show the magic of modern science and art to increase the life-sustaining power of the soil? In answer, it may be said that we have merely ascribed to the direct influence of art and science the credit of what, in reality, indirectly arises out of the power of the railway and steamship to render available, for the uses of man, the long unavailable, stored-up, and accumulated treasures of the soil in remote and hitherto inaccessible lands, which has been confounded with a greater advance in the art of husbandry. That the ancients were enabled to produce cereal crops by their simple

primitive methods and means that would stagger the modern agriculturist, equipped with his multi-form mechanical miracle workers, is shown by the statement of Herodotus and Plinius, that in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, and in Syria, they produced crops of one hundred and fifty fold. Even in our own country and age, so richly endowed by nature and so bounteously aided by art, such results would be the despair of the husbandman.

In the comparative estimates we have made of the population that could be sustained in different times and countries, it is well to bear in mind that in virtue of the simpler and more frugal life of a primitive people, such as those of ancient Italy, not only a larger proportion of the total labor of a community could be directed to the culture of the land, but a greater part of the products of the individual was left for the general sustenance than in the more complex, artificial, and luxurious life of modern times. Our contention is well sustained by the population of ancient Greece, especially of the Attic and Laconian states, though not so richly endowed as Italy, and where the high repute and condition of agricultural pursuits, even in the heroic age, became the constant theme of the great poet of Ascrea.

In this connection, it must be taken into account that in ancient times Italy was held to be the most fortunate of countries in respect of its richness of soil, exuberance and variety of rural products, as well as its pleasing diversity of scenery and salubrious climate.

An ancient Greek historian says of Italy:

"I look upon that country as the best, which is the most self-sufficient, and generally stands least in need of foreign commodities. Now I am persuaded that Italy enjoys this universal fertility, and plenty of everything useful beyond any other country in the world. For it contains a great deal of arable land, without wanting wood like a corn country; on the other side, the soil is proper for all sorts of trees without being reduced to a scarcity of corn, like a wood-land, or by yielding plenty of both, rendered unfit for pasture. Neither can it be said that it is rich in corn, wood, and pasture, yet unpleasant to live in; but abounds, as I may say, in all sorts of delights and advantages. To what country, watered not with rivers, but with rains from Heaven, do the plains of Campania yield; in which I have seen land that bears even three crops in a year, bringing successively to perfection the winter, summer, and autumnal grain? To what olive-grounds are

those of the Mesapii, the Daunii, the Sabines, and many others, inferior? To what vineyards, those of Tyrrhenia, Alba, and Falernus, where the soil is wonderfully kind to vines, and with the least labor produces plenty of the finest grapes? Besides the land that is cultivated, Italy abounds in pastures for sheep and goats; yet more extensive and more wonderful are those that are assigned to horses and neat cattle.

"There are mines of all sorts, plenty of wild beasts for hunting, and a variety of sea-fish; besides innumerable other things, some useful, and others worthy of admiration: but the most advantageous of all, is the happy temper of the air, suiting itself to every season; so that neither the formation of fruits, nor the constitution of animals, are in the least injured by excessive cold or heat. It is no wonder, therefore, that the ancients looked upon this country as consecrated to Saturn, since they esteemed this god to be the giver and accomplisher of all happiness."

All this must lead to the belief that in far-off pre-Roman and perhaps pre-historic times, Italy had reached such a state of material prosperity, culture, and fulness of life, as to awaken the envy of the covetous and prosperous Greek. There seems good reason to suppose that the penin-

sula of Italy was permeated with the higher civilization of the nations less than a day's sail from her own shores, and whose argosies familiarly dotted the ocean even under the shadow of the Pillars of Hercules. In fact, many of the laws, customs, and manners of Rome were derived from the Latin cities which were themselves colonies of Lacedemonia. Is not the belief, therefore, fairly justified that in the peninsula of Italy, a population could, nay, did exist in early times, far in excess of what we in modern times believe to have been possible, and distributed in numerous, and somewhat dissimilar, tribes and communities?

The question thus arises as to whether Rome, even with the aid of the gods, grew out of the integration of crude primal units, or the gathering together of the scattered fragments of a once powerful, all-encompassing nation long gone to decay. Indeed, Rome herself supplies a close analogy in the completed cycle of her life; for, in the dissolution of her world-wide fabric of dominance, the earth was for centuries strewn with the debris of her scattered members,—the process of collecting, appropriating, and reconstructing of which is even yet going on among the nations.

Following this reflection, may we not even now discern in the great medley of incoherent tribes and races of Hindustan, the fragments of a once widespread and coherent Aryan power, that may again be formed into a homogeneous body, only in the fulness of time once more to dissolve into separate and warring elements? Similarly, might not the oft-repeated and unavailing attempts of Greece to affiliate her militant states have in fact been efforts to reunite the fragments of a once overshadowing Turanian power? In these and many like examples there is revealed faint glimpses of a ruthless evolution, the disintegrating and reintegrating forces of which carry all things infinitely onward through an ever-recurring series of endless change.

Thus as respects early Italian annals, if there be a valid historical datum, it is that at the beginning of the Roman era there were dispersed throughout that country in a more or less diffused state, even beyond the Apennines, into the foothills adjacent to the rich valley of the Po, a multitude of hill cities, with their attendant rural element, like in all essentials to Rome itself in its early days. There are, however, no definite annals from which can be deduced either the actual or relative size of these cities, or their order of

distribution throughout the various and varied regions of Italy.

As has been noted, there are many remains of cities scattered throughout the country, that mark in some definite manner their character and extent, from which can be deduced with some degree of precision the number of inhabitants they contained, and the measure of enlightenment to which they attained. Adding the authentic relations that Rome bore to these extinct cities and the internal evidence also that she herself supplied, we become possessed of much that will tend to throw light on many obscure pages of early Italian history, which will strengthen the conviction that the appearance of Rome among the numerous family of tribes and cities, already existing throughout Italy, brought little that was new in the varied categories of life and human experience already familiar to them. This view receives support from the fact that despite her incessant warlike efforts to acquire territory, at the end of two and one half centuries of her existence she still remained one of the smallest of the states of Latium, and at the end of her third century, quite as easily as other neighboring cities, fell before the devastating scourge of the savage Gallic horde, that swept with such destructive fury from

the north throughout this fair and well peopled peninsula.

As bearing upon the general and essential relation of agriculture to cities, it is most important to note the rigid limitations of it in those conditions where it can be carried on only under the defensive protection established by the assemblage of its members in a fortified hill city or town. These limits are determined first, by the pacific nature of the contiguous tribes that will fix the extreme limits to which the uncertain and precarious occupation of the lands can be carried; and second, the distance from the protective centre that agricultural operations can as a practical problem be exercised. It must therefore be evident that for a city state to carry its influence and domain beyond those elementary and impassable limits, it is essential to rely wholly upon conquest as the effective means.

Where a city state can develop a superior and ascendant central military power, it gradually extends, if not its complete sovereignty, at least its suzerainty, over the kindred hill cities and communities that indefinitely surround it. When this is accomplished, those cities that fall within the sphere of its influence, no longer stand in need of the protective and defensive necessities by



which they preserved their individuality, for this is now more effectively supplied by the power and resources of the central city state. This is briefly giving the main causes of the rise and the chief means by which Rome ultimately acquired dominion of the world. To remove that incubus of self-defence that existed, as a prime necessity, in each and all hill towns and communities, with its great burdens upon the agricultural element, brought such relief from embarrassing restraints upon the whole community as greatly increased their useful productive activities, since they became free to direct all their energies wholly to civil and industrial affairs.

This manifest blessing brought by Rome to the ever militant tribes, towns, and cities of Italy stands to her credit as her one bright virtue, and goes far to palliate the hideous wrongs and cruelties she inflicted sometimes at home, and always upon foreign nations. I will not weary you with idle, perhaps groundless, speculations as to whether the building up of such a power possessing the element of permanence can be achieved in any other manner than by weaving together into a measurably homogeneous body locally self-developed and self-existent agricultural communities such as we have described. But it is

sufficiently evident that it was by skilfully gathering together a multitude of these units scattered throughout Italy, under a policy so broad and fundamental as to make it preferable for each to remain an integral part of a great whole, rather than by attempting to maintain an uncertain and precarious individual existence, that gave such solidarity and stability to the Roman commonwealth. This policy continued unimpaired for several centuries, giving that impulse which ended only with the world's conquest, when the interests of the citizens of Rome were made paramount to that of all others.

## IV

### AGRICULTURAL TOWNS

HAVING heretofore considered the collection of agricultural units into fortified towns and cities, when moved wholly by protective necessities, we will now consider those forces which operate to naturally draw them towards the concentrated form of villages and towns, in which form not only its highest condition can be realized, but through which alone a just order and stability of the state can be preserved.

The primary differentiation of the whole body of complex productive forces and energies embodied in the purely agricultural and rural state of mankind into special forms and groups is both natural and definite. They resolve themselves into two special classes: first, those that in nature are essentially agricultural; and second, those that are subsidiary to and arise wholly out of the former.

It is manifest that there is a wide difference in

the nature of that labor immediately applied to and directly causing the soil to yield its sustenance to man, and that essential to create those appliances in the appropriate use of which they become indirect aids in performing that labor. Thus there is a distinct and essential difference in the nature of the labor necessary to make the hoe, and the labor in the use of the hoe in performing its intended function. It is evident, also, that there similarly exists a like difference in the labor, appliances, and operations of the household, which are subsidiary to the purely agricultural operations to which they stand in an essential relation.

As a guiding generality in tracing the evolution of agriculture to its highest and most perfect state, we must point out the several distinct and elementary conditions under which it is possible to exist, with widely variant results. The process of farming can be carried on by either of two innately different methods. The one, which is yet largely prevalent, is that wherein there is united in one body of operations all the diverse forms of labor and varied elements that make up agricultural processes in their entirety.

The other is where they are separated into two groups of correlated forces which, while essentially divergent in character, have in reality a co-ordinate

and mutually sustaining action. In this state it assumes the form of a village or town, perhaps the most perfect condition under which purely agricultural operations can be carried on, reaching its highest state when measured in the light of total best results. Conversely, where all the forces and factors of husbandry are united in one general scheme, the least aggregate of desirable and possible results is attained.

Where each cultivator of the soil combines in one general operation all the labors, methods, and appliances that pertain to his art, it is obvious that he cannot bestow either the time or careful attention to those operations germane to the profession of husbandry, upon the extent and thoroughness of which the net results of all his labors wholly depend. It is well known that to reach the highest excellence in the economy of production, exclusive and concentrated effort is indispensable. To engage them, therefore, upon those objects that do not directly contribute to the special purpose desired is but to unprofitably consume time and energy, confuse and derange effort, and lessen effect.

This condition is most perfectly realized where the farmer lives upon the land he tills, and where he combines within himself all the direct and

indirect labor and agencies, whereby the soil is made to yield its products. To separate these integral elements of husbandry, as indicated, he is free, therefore, to bestow his entire energy, and to more effectively direct his thought and attention to the specific processes, essentially agricultural.

This condition can be fully realized by the individual farmers uniting in a collective body, in which there will, in virtue of this collective state, arise such divisions of labor as will more advantageously supply all necessities and appliances that indirectly relate to those operations strictly germane to agriculture, than if produced by his own unskilled labor. It is because of these manifold advantages that arise out of a concentration and specialization of the productive forces in a communal body that the diffused factors of agriculture tend to flow towards a common centre of attraction.

A partial realization of this highest state of agriculture can be attained where cognate forces of production separate from those peculiar to pure agriculture, and unite in one common body where their highest and most perfect action will result. There will thus, by a natural segregating process, develop a centre of population quite distinct from the purely agricultural that

surrounds it, and a class of labor equally distinct.

While it is true that where the farming element live on their respective farms, and yield to the special adaptive forms of labor in the village the production of those appliances essential to the farm, they will obtain these appliances more advantageously than if produced by their own unskilled labor, there yet remains a body of domestic affairs and other unformulated matters, relating indirectly to those of agriculture, that could also be specialized in the village, so that they would vastly contribute to increased comfort, convenience, and fuller economic results. The village thus formed where agriculture still remains in its diffused state is, therefore, but a partial and imperfect development of that more perfect state which is realized when all the industrial and domestic forces are concentrated in a village or communal body, and where there develops the most perfect correlation of all the industrial, economic, and social forces contained in an agricultural body of defined proportions.

By thus divorcing, as it were, the two distinct classes of labor embodied in primitive agricultural operations, and each becoming a helpful complement of the other, and united in a village or town,

there can be attained not only a larger volume, but greater excellence, in all the products of the entire community, since all its industrial and economic forces exist and operate under those natural conditions that secure alike for each a maximum of effective energy. To maintain them in an unformulated state, in a homogeneous agricultural body, would be to realize in each an imperfect action and a minimum of results.

In the just correlation of all the industrial factors contained in a given agricultural body, by centring them in the village, we find the germ that progressively develops, from the village into the town, and from the town into the city.

I trust you will bear with me in the effort to trace, in a more specific manner, the evolution of the urban state of life.

To sustain life is the first and last desire, object, and necessity of mankind, and it is from this that spring all the varied forms of human energy and activity. The natural and inherent tendency of the human family being to increase in such a ratio as to cause it to persistently press upon the possible means of its subsistence, it follows that the one is dependent upon and rigidly limited by the other. Thus it is in the field of the contending and unequal forces of life's demands and nature's



supply that the precarious struggle of man for existence must ever be maintained and determined. This struggle must definitely delimit the urban and rural states of mankind, so long as the soil is the one only source from whence man can draw those elements essential to maintain human life. Nor does it seem probable that he will ever escape from or avert this imperative relation between the generative tendency of the human race and the possible means of sustaining its life. Should he, however, ultimately become enabled to create new sources of supply, other than those due to natural conditions and causes, and thereby augment the means of subsistence, it would at once be followed by a corresponding increase in the human family conformable with such an increase in the means of its subsistence, when the same pressure upon it would be again speedily restored. The prime necessity, therefore, of the human family, and one from which it cannot escape, is to provide the necessary means to sustain the life of its individual members. Hence, if any class or section of it secures to itself an excess beyond what it is vitally dependent upon, it can do so only by encroaching upon the existence of that portion of mankind which must rely upon its entire efforts to produce those means primarily essential

to life. Such acquired excess would involve a diversion of effort that might be applied to the betterment and amelioration of the human family, and enable it to attain the fullest condition of life possible under the limitations imposed by nature; hence such excess must be degenerative in its effects upon the larger part of mankind. From this it would appear that a general state of excess or luxury is incompatible with the first necessity of existence, as well as its perpetuity. As there is contained in the urban state of man no form of qualitative force or quantitative energy that did not pre-exist, either actually or potentially, in the prior and more primary rural state of the human race, such urban state cannot, therefore, arise from self-generative causes, but in origin and subsequent support is wholly dependent upon the anterior rural state, out of the life forces of which there concentrated those peculiar to, and constituting, the urban or collective form of mankind. To say that it can have its origin and maintain its existence separate and apart from the primary or rural condition of the human family, would be as if one said that the eagle could soar beyond the atmosphere wherein it floats and by which it is sustained.

As there is, therefore, not embodied in the urban

state of man anything that in its own proper nature and action can directly sustain life within itself, it can of necessity arise only out of, is wholly dependent upon, and subordinate to, the more general and primary rural condition of mankind. A relation growing out of causes so elementary and fundamental—being that of child to parent—it implies of necessity that it can exist only under definite and impassable limitations.

But it may be urged that such definite and fixed relation of the urban and rural elements of a people does not essentially exist, since among the nations there is often observed the widest divergence in the ratio of the urban to the agrarian life and interests, as in one the former may vastly preponderate, and in another the latter may be equally in excess. It must, however, be distinctly noted that it is only in those nations where the commercial spirit is the ascendant one that there is found an excessive disproportion of the urban to the rural element.

This fully accounts for any marked disparity existing in such nations, since their commercial influence, being carried into the agricultural domain of countries beyond their own border, the excess of the urban over the rural element in such nations conforms strictly to the extent to which

such influence has been carried into the agricultural realm of foreign lands. Hence, when there exists in a nation a pronounced excess of the urban over that which would have prevailed if such nation had confined its whole industrial energies to the field of its own domestic resources, such excess will be found to closely correspond with the extent to which that nation has enlarged its agricultural relations with foreign countries above that of its own domestic agriculture. Therefore, in considering the probable validity of the proposition laid down, it is imperative to consider also the entire rural and urban population and interests existing, *as a whole*, in all the nations having commercial intercourse with one another. Self-existent as is the primal or rural state of the human family, and so wholly dependent upon it in origin and existence as is the urban, or secondary and subordinate part, there nevertheless exists, as we have heretofore indicated, a natural tendency of the inchoative forces contained in the rural body to segregate into special forms, and hence there crystallizes therefrom, into a specific form, those forces that are peculiar to the urban, or collective state of mankind.

In this separation of the elemental forces contained in the rural body of a people into those

primary divisions on lines so natural and fundamental, there will be attained, as before pointed out, a fuller life and a more complete development of the whole human family, being a result in accord with the harmonious operation of nature's laws.

There is manifestly embodied in the very spirit of natural trade and industrial laws a vital corrective, operating to conserve these just reciprocal relations, the outgrowth of their full and equable action. This seems self-evident, for where there has been reached a due balance between the cardinal productive forces, there can be no innate tendency towards a disturbance of this equilibrium, since the increase or decrease of either can arise from internal causes only; there of necessity must follow a corresponding increase or diminution of the others. You will, therefore, perceive that any disturbance of the well-ordered harmony of the integral parts of an industrial body can arise from extraneous causes alone.

When we critically consider those essentially distinct and different groups of labor which naturally generate from the collection of a given number of agricultural units into the concrete form of a village or town, we discover that there inheres in their very nature and related capacities

the possibilities of disturbing extraneous influences such as may become fatal to the just relation of parts, upon which the stability and integrity of the communal body depend. Carefully viewed, it is apparent that when assembled in the form of a village, the innate forces contained in an agricultural body differentiate into two sections, widely divergent in their character: those that attach and are peculiar to agriculture, and those connate only with the collective estate of mankind.

The marked characteristic that distinguishes these two groups, so innately different in nature, is the capacity of the one for unlimited growth and development, and the want of a like power of indefinite expansion in the other. In this we can trace the germ of that influence which, more than all other causes, operates to dislocate the economic and industrial affairs of a nation. We have ventured to define the life principle of an organic body, corporeal or otherwise, as existing in the just co-ordination and equable interaction of its component parts. While not of a tangible nature, an industrial and economic organism is possessed of the same general features, characteristic of and subject to the interactions of its related and constituent parts, as are those that affect the life

conditions of corporeal bodies. If this be true, it follows that a sound, healthy, and well-ordered industrial and economic body can be maintained only by a natural and true correlation of its cardinal parts. An undue preponderance or deficiency of either must imply an unhealthy state of the whole.

In the vast and inscrutable economy of nature, we find in the animal part of it there are those that live upon its decayed members. But in the just order of nature's operations, the normal state of animal life is that of health, and disease is but an evidence of a derangement of her laws. The lives of those creatures dependent upon conditions so abnormal and exceptional must, in like manner, be precarious and uncertain. In the order of their distribution, therefore, they form an inconsiderable, even insignificant, part of the whole. Similarly, when the industrial and economic body becomes diseased, there spontaneously arises that class adapted and suited to live and thrive upon its diseased members also.

We have seen that in the marked and essential difference in the two cardinal elements into which the innate forces of an agricultural body necessarily integrates, when assuming the character of

a village, or communal body, there lies the nascent possibility of such inharmony of action through external influences and causes as may subvert all healthy relations between them.



## V

### ETHICS OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

**I**T is here that the ethical equation enters as the most potent determining factor in the economic relations of man. It is apart from our purpose or desire to deal with the abstract ethics involved in an enquiry as to the remote origin of that tendency of mankind to pervert what is inherently good, and which visits upon him much of the evils that afflict the world. It is sufficient to note that it is coeval with his origin and continues with undiminished tendency, and can as yet be accounted for only by the all too proximate reasons, that it is due to the weakness, frailty, and imperfections of mankind.

The evolution of the political forces of a nation into that concrete body of laws known as government has followed the same integrating process of primal units that marks the general development of organic bodies. Being, therefore, in a larger sense a natural evolution, such government can be re-

garded as the highest, perhaps the only possible, product of the whole body, and of the complex conditions out of which it evolved.

As no state of mankind can ever assume a fixed form, being subject to involved internal and external modifying influences, it is manifest that the body of laws, suited to, and in harmony with, those special conditions out of which it arose, cannot remain in adjustment with those which in the growth of the nation must progressively and inevitably arise. Therefore, the natural evolution of the laws of a nation must ever be in direct correspondence with that of the more general evolution of the nation itself.

It is in the effort to adjust the laws to an ever-changing condition of national affairs that political differences and partisan divisions originate, since in the general development there arises out of the common interests those of a specific and special nature, and we thus often find that the very efforts to establish harmony only increase the disorder they sought to prevent or remove.

In the perversion of a noble and needful into an insatiate desire to accumulate, we can discover the origin of all those efforts of a special class or interest to unjustly divert a portion of the public wealth to their own selfish benefit and advantage.

The two great bodies of productive force, the resultant definite product of a natural integration of kindred units comprised in their heterogeneous forms in agriculture—the common parent of all—should, in virtue of their identity of origin, tend to maintain none other than a mutually sustaining relation. If it be otherwise, we must look to the mischievous intervention of man for the sole adequate cause.

In his efforts to regulate, by his own laws, the various relations of the human family in their many social and industrial capacities, he too often fails to discern that such legislative purposes can be attained only through the diversion into specific channels of those natural forces by and through which these relations are created and exist. As nature's laws are ever persistent, and in their totality harmonious in action, their results, being the necessary consequence of them, are, therefore, the highest possible. Any effect upon them through the influence of the laws of man will, in the very nature of things, tend to create conditions and relations at variance with those that must have resulted from the undisturbed flow of cause and effect in the uniform course of nature's own laws. In this attempt to divert nature's methods and arrest the just order of her laws, by the in-

tervention of those of man, there lies the possibility of such strife and confusion in all human affairs as to seriously impede the natural course of, and hence its true, development.

The evolution of the political forces of a nation into a concrete body of laws or government has followed, as we have noted, the same segregating process of primal units that marks the generation of all organic bodies. Being, therefore, in the widest sense a natural evolution, such government must be regarded as the highest, perhaps the only possible, product of all the forces and elements constituting the entire body out of which they evolved. But as no state of mankind, as we have pointed out, can remain fixed or constant, but is ever subject to change, it is manifest that no body of laws arising out of, and suited to, one condition of the human family, can bear a sustained harmony with those of a different character that in the progress of nature must continuously and inevitably arise. The evolution of the laws of the people must thus be in strict correspondence with a more general evolution.

As all the various and diverse material interests of the whole people arise out of a natural order of development dependent upon mutual necessities, and as the political forces have followed the same

course of development, it would seem that in a harmonious society, containing in its structure a conserving tendency of all its parts, there could arise no political force not in consonance with the best interests of all its members.

At the risk of needless prolixity, we must recur again to those natural laws through the unison of whose operation we have endeavored to show that organic bodies arise. We have seen that in the different conditions of a primitive people there is a natural tendency in the component units to segregate into special groups of like units. In this process there form more or less concentrated assemblages according to the nature and degree of the forces that cause them to gravitate together. It has been pointed out, also, that, in the very nature of the art of agriculture, the highest state can be reached only when its workers are concentrated in small communities under the primary limitations of its assembling forces. It has appeared, also, that such forces as are intrinsic to village or town life have the nature of unlimited growth and expansion. Theoretically, we find that in its most perfect form, by a natural integration, the entire nation is divided into two elementary sections of industrial forces: agriculture, with its multitude of widely diffused small

communities; and the urban, with its equally natural concentration into a smaller number, but larger communities or cities.

The towns and cities themselves, as a whole, when considered as a body of units, follow a like course of differentiation and development. There is a similar tendency among the component factors and forces in each urban centre, separated and diffused throughout a nation, to gravitate towards those centres in which there exists the greatest number of natural and acquired advantages, whereby such concentration of forces will produce a larger aggregate of beneficial results than if they remained and were exercised in the widely diffused centres where there are less favorable conditions and facilities of production. It is this natural tendency of the productive forces in less favored centres to assemble in those possessed of superior advantages that causes the unequal growth of cities witnessed in all nations.

We have ventured to point out that when this division of the whole body of the nation into these primary groups has resulted from natural causes, and on harmonious lines, there can be no inharmony of interest, since they arise out of, and exist only by, a common necessity and through mutually helpful and sustaining causes.

Although it might be sufficient to our purpose to deal only with observed facts and established truths, we will venture upon a brief discussion of the ethical question,—why it is that the tendency of mankind toward vice is in a direct ratio to the degree and extent of its intimacy of association? In common with other ethical problems, in which we vainly seek the ultimate cause, it may not be wholly fruitless to venture to point out in this case the more obvious ones.

We find in the moral nature of man that the governing principle which directs him toward a right relation with his fellows lies not so much in the hope of present as of distant rewards. As matter is the one perceptible, immediate, and concrete cause that not only awakens his thoughts, emotions, sentiments, and bodily activities, but constitutes the sensible means of his happiness and pleasures, it is difficult for him to be as deeply impressed by the more abstract idea, that in the realm of the imponderable there exists a moral essence that can not only give greater happiness in this life, but can insure as a distant reward for right conduct an endless happiness in a world to come.

In his finite state, it is far easier for man to be impressed by, and to follow the guidance of, influ-

ences and laws that seem to inhere in the tangible universe about him than those of an invisible and abstract nature. It is, therefore, the material and physical means of happiness, with their immediate rewards, that most impress him and control his relations with others.

It is in the cities, that mankind finds greater resources of material enjoyment; for under the innate conditions of urban life there are presented not only more abundant visible means of happiness, but in more profuse and alluring forms than in any other mode of existence. The fierce intensity of life in the cities, its confusion and profusion, its intoxicating excitements, haste, and distractions, preclude that state of mental repose and calm essential to contemplate the more abstract attributes and principles that underlie and govern our life, which, as rules of conduct, are the only guides whereby mankind can reach that state of highest, truest, and most enduring happiness.

This greater intensity of interaction in the cities is in conformity with the primary law of matter, that the impressions of one body upon another are inversely as the distance that separates them. This being true of inanimate bodies, how much more so must it be as between those endowed with a self-moving principle. It



follows, therefore, that for a given number of human units in a denser form, in the cities, there will arise out of their closer approximation vastly greater, more intense, involved, and confused interactions than in a like number of units of mankind existing in the diffused and simpler forms of rural life. In the contagions of their fiercer and intenser intercourse, is it not rather more the vices than the virtues of mankind that are propagated in the whirl and throng of life? Does not man, indeed, seek the true light and highest spirit of devotion by wholly retiring himself from the active world, and through solitary worship, silent meditation, and self-communion?

But as it is the sensible and not intangible properties that inspire the greatest action between bodies possessed of voluntary motion, their active relations are more largely confined to the material affairs of existence, becoming, by their mutual actions and reactions, progressively more and more artificial and involved.

In the wider separation of the units of mankind in his rural condition, he is not to the same degree as in the cities encompassed by material forms and relations, with their constraining influence upon his thoughts and actions, and he is, therefore, freer to fall under the dominion of the more abstract

principles and influences that make for a higher and purer state of life. It is, therefore, in virtue of the widely different conditions of life that the one finds, in concrete forms and artificial conditions, his chief aspiration and stimulus to action; and the other, in simpler and more natural surroundings, derives his guidance from abstract principles and intangible forms.

It is the untutored mind that sees God in the clouds, hears Him in the wind, and finds in the groves His first temples; and it is the cultured mind that sees Him in massive temples and colossal ornate structures, and worships Him through the material media of concrete formulas. It is in the greater attrition of units, and closer proximity with their fiercer conflicts in the cities, that there develops in a corresponding degree a sense of the highest law of life,—self-preservation.

It must be here noted that in the exercise of like political rights vested in each individual of the nation there arises, in many instances, the anomaly, that a vastly disproportionate power is wielded in the government by the cities, beyond that of a similar franchise in the country. Even more, an inferior electorate in the cities can wield a much greater influence than a superior one in the rural element of the nation. The solution of

this is to be found in the fact, that in the more compact state of the electorate of the city there lies a more constant and intimate intercourse, and thus a higher capacity to organize its political forces into a homogeneous body such as will possess the greatest vital energy, under united and common interests to be directed in definite directions and for specific objects,—only too often of a selfish nature.

As illustrating this facility to unite the political units of a city into a compact accordant mass, with an identity of purpose and interest, it has long been a familiar spectacle in the material field of politics, that the small crystallized forces of a few cities can dominate at pleasure the unformulated forces of half a nation. While the inherent political power of a city may become diversified into subsidiary groups, in accord with their special interests, they are, as a whole, always united by a common interest that may arise from their relation to external affairs.

The inherent inability of the rural electorate to maintain the same intimate and continuous intercourse precludes the possibility of their giving full force and adequate expression to their innate political rights and power.

It essentially follows that a total of political

units, widely diffused in the rural classes of a nation, are a far less potent factor in the general government than an inferior number existing in a concentrated form in the cities. It must be remembered that a wise solution of a fundamental policy, vitally affecting the general interest and welfare, can be reached only when there is the most complete interchange of individual opinions and views throughout the entire electorate, and unless this can be done the influence of the demagogue becomes paramount.

The marked advantage of combined political forces, in virtue of their more available form in the cities, is shown in France. By concentrating her agricultural population into villages and communes, there is in some measure realized those special political advantages peculiar to the collective state of mankind. In many ways, their beneficial effects upon her agricultural element are manifest.

The most conspicuous influence in the increased political power of the agriculturists, secured thereby, is the effective restraint it imposes upon the larger and more powerful urban centres of the nation, standing as a secure bulwark against those selfish predatory inroads upon rural rights, so often witnessed in other nations under the uncon-

trolled sway of a dominant urbanism. In those nations where this nascent political power has not materialized, by crystallizing its agriculture into communal groups, thereby securing to it a power in the government commensurate with the important part it plays in the industrial and economic affairs of the nation, the overwhelming, and of right the dominant, agrarian power must ever play a subordinate rôle in the legislative affairs of the government. To secure and maintain this just co-ordinate power is possible only in a concentrated form of the agricultural body of a nation, hence it becomes the final evolution of rural life.

As an instance of how the dominant forces of the cities can be effectively directed towards acquiring unjust advantages over the agricultural interests of a nation, the corn laws of England may be cited as a conspicuous example. In their immediate effects they promoted the interests and growth of the cities, and directly, as a consequence, the partial ruin of her vast agricultural system which then, even as now, in its depressed state, was the one overshadowing industry of the United Kingdom. It was to these laws, also, that can be directly ascribed the abnormal growth and prosperity of the cities and their cognate industries during the last half-century.

In a strict analysis, it was largely an indirect transference of the wealth of the agrarian element of the country into the cities; and there must be set against the entire urban gain a very large total loss sustained by the country during that time in a gross estimate of national wealth.

When all the direct and indirect results and effects are summed up in the great account, it is a question whether the remaining net balance justifies the hazard that this nation took in building up, by the power of the government, one class of industries at the expense of another.

That such favoritism of law, operating to develop the cities and their special interests at the expense of a nation's agriculture, is fraught with the most dangerous future consequences, is shown by the violent conflict of public opinion now raging in England. This great nation, resting supinely for half a century in the comfortable belief as to the perfection of her fiscal laws and economic system, seems to have suddenly awakened to the perils that, in fact, insidiously lurked in a system that was long lauded for its benign influence manifest in the " *blessings of universal prosperity.*" So swift and marked a change has come over their commercial dreams that they now seem to see that in the magic of fiscal laws, so recently and

universally applauded, there really exists the dangerous virus of socialism.

How the hypnotic influence of self-interest can warp even the best-ordered minds and characters is shown by the belief, rapidly obtaining among influential citizens in all nations, that those laws which favorably affect the great masses of a nation are socialistic in nature; while those that in like manner benefit the smaller class of wealth and privilege are sound and conserving in principle, and salutary in effect.

In our own country, this building up of the urban, at the expense of the rural interests of the nation, is even more manifest than in England. It is one of the many economic anomalies in the ultimate working of trade laws, that, under the special conditions prevailing in our own country, a like effect was produced by not only different, but exactly opposite, means to those employed in England. Our protective tariff, land, and kindred laws caused an even more phenomenal upbuilding of the urban, and with even more disastrous effects upon the rural element of the nation than resulted from the contrary laws of Sir Robert Peel. That laws favoring special interests can profoundly dislocate the productive forces of a nation and cause a vicious distribution of its pro-

ducts is more than sufficiently shown by the effect of those laws in our country that operated to enrich the urban at the expense of the rural element.

The consideration of a few special features that mark the direct results of these discriminating laws may serve to reveal their astounding and baleful effects. Prior to the enactment of those measures that so obviously favored the urban interests of the nation, the general growth and prosperity developed, *pari passu*, with the importance of these two great cardinal industries of our country. Since the passage of those laws, out of the total net increase of the wealth of the nation almost eight tenths passed into the hands of the urban, while the other two tenths was all that was allowed to be retained by the rural element of it. And yet this was during the most marvellous period of apparent prosperity ever witnessed by the nation, and it was only a moiety of the ratio of net gains of the rural population to the urban before those laws were enacted, and when the average population was less than half.

Further, as disclosing this glaring irregularity, during this period those engaged in husbandry were nearly six tenths of the whole population; and still further, the ratio of growth of the rural



portion of the nation was equal to that of the urban prior to the passage of these laws; while, subsequent to their enactment, the growth of the urban element more than doubled their former ratio. During the whole period when the cyclonic urban wave swept with such destructive effect over the rural interests throughout England and the United States, the agricultural affairs of France, secure from the danger of a like serious disturbing influence, continued to prosper apace, and maintain, undiminished, its wonted relation to the whole productive industries of the nation, and secured to itself a full co-ordinate share of the aggregate created wealth. This equable and just distribution of wealth between the two cardinal producing factors, the rural and the urban, can be attributed only to the just balance of political forces severally existing and maintained within the French nation, thus rendering each secure against an undue encroachment upon the full rights of the one by the other.

Thus, during the period that witnessed those violent dislocations in the industrial affairs of England and the United States, those of France steadily progressed in a coequal ratio, giving her as a whole that stability of economic prosperity which makes her the envied of the nations, and

the development of that marvellous financial strength upon which it has become the custom of other nations to lean when, by the unequal action of their own trade and fiscal laws, serious internal disturbances in their financial and economic affairs arise.

It is needless to say that this equable balance of the political forces of the nation, with its guarantee of a just distribution of the results of its whole productive energy, was wholly due to the separation of the rural element in France into villages and communal bodies; in which assembled form there evolved a political power, realizing for that interest an influence in the legislative affairs of the nation commensurate with its extent and relative importance in the entire industries of France. To what degree the intrinsic political forces of rural France can be resolved into one harmonious, effective body, vitalized by one common impelling force and unity of interest and purpose, can be realized when it is stated that the entire body of the population being divided into 37,700 villages, towns, and communes, those of a rural nature, or below two thousand people, number 35,400; while those essentially urban and above two thousand, number only 2300.

By this distribution of the rural forces of France,

you will see that no antagonism of interest or militant attitude can arise between the great urban and agricultural bodies, such as exists in those countries where husbandry is so conditioned that the rise of an ascendant urban political power in the nation becomes inevitable.

This antagonism of the rural and urban elements of a nation, with the grave menace to its stability, has long engaged the attention of the economist and the statesman. The Spartan law-giver was perhaps the first to clearly perceive the true nature of this antagonism, the dangers arising out of it, and the necessary measures to arrest it. He also saw the true legislative specific competent to meet the industrial and civic disorders that arise, as a necessary consequence, out of the inharmony of these interests.

That he distinctly recognized the element of danger to the state in the unchecked encroachments of the city upon the rights of the country is clearly evidenced by the fact, that every regulative principle in his political institutions had for its special object the protection of the rural classes against the aggressive tendencies of the city, and the creation of an equable and stable relation of both. A complete division of the lands among all the citizens was supplemented by a

restraint and, in a measure, prohibition of trade, commerce, and manufacture,—the most distinct city building agencies, that in time establish the dominance of the urban over the rural element of the state.

By this and other regulative measures in the affairs of the people, he rendered them secure against encroachments of special interests and classes, in fact rendering their development in the state impossible; thus creating an equilibrium in all its activities, and a lasting, just, and homogeneous state of all. That the object of his institutions was not utopian, or his laws without value or practical force and effect, is shown by the subsequent history of Laconia, which rose at once to the highest position of power, prosperity, and glory, becoming the most powerful and envied of all the Grecian states, over which it wielded a commanding influence for more than four hundred years, and which ended only with the life of his institutions.

## VI

### VICE OF CITIES

**T**HAT there is greater innate tendency towards vice in the cities than in the rural conditions of life scarcely needs more confirming proof than is found in the marked difference in the policing and restraining necessities of the urban and rural elements of a nation. As compared with their number, productive power, and useful results to the nation, there is such an overwhelming disparity in the cost and effort to maintain order, peace, and security among them, respectively, as might stagger the statesman and moralist. This manifest inequal ethical status of the city and the country that has always subsisted, has been observed from the remotest times, and has ever been the lay of the poet and the bard.

Whatever may be the cause or causes of this greater trend toward vice and crime in the cities than in the rural classes, the predatory propensity, manifest through the ages in the former, ever

impels them to seek aggrandizement, alike in the desolation of the country and the plunder of the weaker cities. Indeed, the early history of Rome itself was that of robbery and of devastating and daring incursions into the territory of peaceful and adjacent tribes by the warlike inhabitants of the city on the Palatine Hill, known in history as the "Rogues' Asylum of Romulus."

That was indeed her history to the last, and it was the ruthless promptings of an insatiate cupidity and greed that pressed her on to the world's conquest; not, as some sentimental historians would have us believe, the inspiration of high moral aims and noble impulses.

The chief characteristic that, more than all others, distinguished Rome from the many sister cities that surrounded her,—the full development of which led to her universal dominion,—is, that while there remained in the other hill cities a measurable balance of a primitive agricultural and pastoral people, the urban element through her warlike predilections was from the outstart the ruling power in the city state. The first necessities engendered by this urban predominance were met by an unjust encroachment upon the rights of her own agricultural classes, and later by trampling upon the rights and arbitrarily

appropriating the resources and territory of neighboring towns and cities.

The passion for robbery by the urban power of the Roman city state grew by every accretion of plunder, through the inductive reactions of appetite and gratification, into an implacable one, such that ultimately the world's arena alone could supply an adequate field to satiate it; thus eventually culminating in that debauchery of the city (the heart of the nation) whose reflex and fatal miasma, permeating the entire body-politic, ended in the final ruin and utter desolation of the empire.

We have endeavored, as you have seen heretofore, to trace in some elemental manner the special causes that operate in the collective state of man to evolve new forms of vice, and to augment to an excessive degree and unduly inflame the evil propensities of mankind.

From earliest times, the history of the human race is but one long array of evidence showing that of all agencies to excite and animate the nascent frailties of the human heart and its baser passions, kindling them into actions to their own injury, that of wealth is more than all others the most potent. Evil as the power of wealth may be—when wrongly exercised in its diffused condition—it is vastly augmented in degree,

in the inverse ratio to which the human family becomes concentrated. Indeed, it is in the cities that wealth finds its fullest sphere of exercise, and therefore to these centres it naturally gravitates. Great as is this natural tendency, it is inordinately augmented by the many artificial aids supplied by modern agencies of distribution and communication. So vast and all-pervading have these agencies become, that they possess the power, not only to concentrate through converging channels what is of advantage to the cities, but also to radiate from their centres baleful influences through every part and fibre of the nation.

We have seen that the stability and equality of the rural and urban elements of a nation upon which its whole industrial and economic structure rests, can be preserved only when the agricultural forces of the country are assembled in the form of villages, towns, and communities, in which state alone can develop the political power essential to maintain that equality. Indeed, of necessity, it arises out of that law of evolution causing the homogeneous units, under variant influences upon the whole, to assume more complex forms and a more definite segregation of its parts into those of a specific character. The per-



manence of this relation among the prime factors in a nation can be disturbed only by the many forces peculiar to the cities; which forces, in virtue of a more complete contexture than is possible in the agricultural element, may develop, under a real or assumed exigency, a dominance of city influence over the whole state.

This sometimes assumes a military character, which is directed generally against some foreign race or nation. This unequal exercise of such unwarranted power of the cities can be perpetuated only when, by the spoils of war, there is accumulated in them such a degree of wealth as to render them no longer dependent upon that essential relation they hitherto sustained to the whole industrial and productive forces of the state. Yet, unless there be continued, from sources beyond the state itself, accretions of wealth to the cities, the original relation of the urban and rural elements out of which it evolved would, by gradual readjustments, be again restored. The effects of this unbalanced relation of the prime productive forces of the state would in time disappear, leaving only as an undesirable residuum a modicum of wealth that grew not out of its innate resources, and the far more dangerous military spirit centred mainly in the cities.

This predatory propensity of cities has perhaps never been more manifest, or more disastrously displayed, than in the hostile relations that subsisted for ages between a multitude of city states that diversified the small and narrow Grecian peninsula, and its adjacent and ever militant islands.

The equilibrium of the salient civic forces of the people could have been as effectively unsettled by the evolution of its martial spirit, if the predatory object had failed of its purpose. In this case, the loss entailed by any unsuccessful attempt would fall mainly upon the cities, where the military power predominated. This would disturb that fixed proportion of the urban and rural wealth and other forces which give it a degree of stability before the rise of the military spirit of the cities.

This inequilibrium so created would be the more speedily removed than in the event of a more triumphant military effort; since, in the one case, success would stimulate an aggressive spirit and thus tend to maintain the disturbed relation of the urban and the rural element of the state, while, on the other hand, its military ardor would be repressed and thus tend to restore the essential harmony and established proportions of its vari-

ous civil elements. The danger arising from an undue development of an inordinate martial spirit in a nation finds a signal illustration in the ultimate effects of the laws of Lycurgus, against which his institutions failed to fully safeguard the Spartan nation.

Indeed, so essentially did they exist in the very spirit and the necessary outcome of their operations, so subtle were they in effect, and so obscure in form, that it is small wonder that it escaped the penetrating forecast of that able and astute lawgiver. It is admitted by all historians that there was realized the main object of his institutions, developing the fullest equality of interests and rights of the people, the greatest nobility of character, and the highest civic virtues attained by any ancient people.

In the very nature of his polity, the rigidity of his laws, their severity of discipline, the creation of that dull monotony of universal equality of material interests and rights, it left to the individual only a personal aspiration for that distinctive character arising from honorable effort and noble aims achieved. This was the ultimate effect of his laws, giving to the Spartan those stern virtues and commanding qualities, so envied and feared by other nations, and which endured as

long as the integrity of his institutions was preserved and maintained, and ceased only when the irrepressible predatory military spirit of the people burst forth.

By the very spirit of those laws that created these high civic virtues, long the honorable characteristic of the people, they must, as a necessary practical effect, ultimately create also that predatory military spirit and power so long wielded with such marvellous force by that nation. The concurrent development of that marked civic and military character of the Spartan, by the effects of the same institutions, at last brought the ascendancy of the latter, which marks the decline and final passing of his supremacy long maintained in the Hellenic world. But it was not until the predatory prevailed over the purely martial that the civic virtues were subordinated to the military spirit and power of the nation.

Thus, even when the wars carried on by their later kings and generals resulted in the eventual capture of the rich and powerful city of Athens, their ancient virtues still subsisted among the people in such vital force as to reject the vast and tempting spoils of war as dangerous to the stability and integrity of the state. Therefore when Lysander returned from the conquest of

Athens, freighted with the rich plunder of that city, and while he refused to personally accept a portion of the corrupting spoils, having carried the gold and silver of Athens to Sparta, it was promptly rejected by the Spartans as so much "*imported ruin.*" By a rare inconsistency, it was finally determined to accept the silver and gold of Athens for the sole uses of the state, imposing at the same time the severest penalty upon the personal use of it. Thus there was again reintroduced the virus of avarice and greed among the people, so long secure against its corrupting power, which finally debased the heart, sullied the purity of the government, and destroyed the nation that for centuries held such a dominant and honorable position among the Grecian states.

You will pardon me if I indulge in what may seem somewhat irrelevant, but yet pertinent, reflections upon the question why laws similar in nature and like in purpose should in one nation eminently succeed, and in another as signally fail, in their object. We refer especially to the laws given to Athens by Solon, and those by Lycurgus to Sparta. We believe that the essential cause of the failure of the one, and the success of the other, lies in the wide difference in the industrial and productive composi-

tion of the two cities and nations, not unlike to that we have been considering.

Both the Athenian and Spartan lawgivers found in their respective cities the same inequality of rights, privileges, and power; and a like distinct division of the people of the state into a small dominant nobility on the one hand, and a numerous semi-enslaved peasantry and proletariat on the other. It was the purpose of Solon and Lycurgus alike, by such laws and institutions as would enlarge the rights of the one class and reduce the privileges of the other, to establish a more equable distribution of civil rights, of political power, and of the material affairs of the whole people. Their efforts were attended with widely different results.

Those of the Athenian only accentuated the very evils they were intended to remove, and increased the measure of power they sought to restrain; while those of the Spartan established, on a secure basis, the just and co-ordinate rights, powers, and interests of all classes. The reforms of the Athenian fell into immediate desuetude, and the government soon passed under the sway of a tyrant; while those of the Spartan endured with unabated vigor and virtue for centuries,

We must here note a difference in the material, industrial, and productive status of the two nations, so marked as in a measure to account for legislative results so dissimilar. Both Athens and Sparta were the capitalistic centres of a definite territory, each radiating, throughout their respective domain, their political and other influences. The population of the Attic state was composed of the usual agricultural and urban classes, the latter centred in Athens and the smaller towns scattered throughout the country. Laconia was similarly constituted as respects the division and diffusion of her people; but it differed widely from that of the Attic state, since, true to her Doric origin, the rural population vastly preponderated; while in the former (from her Ionic descent), the urban population was correspondingly in excess.

This difference in proportion of the agricultural to the whole people in the respective nations was due wholly to the fact that the Attic race was essentially a commercial, manufacturing, and trading people, while that of Laconia was of an agricultural and pastoral character. This difference in their industrial pursuits was clearly reflected in the capitals of the two nations. The one was a busy mart of trade, commerce, manufacturing, and

industry; the other, that of a simpler, less complex character, growing out of the dominant agricultural and rural pursuits in Laconia, with their limited and peculiar demands and necessities. Although agriculture possessed some relative importance in the Attic domain, Athens was in fact the capital of a trading, manufacturing, and commercial, as Sparta was that of an agricultural, state.

It is therefore sufficient to note, in explanation of the failure on the one hand and the success on the other, of a like salutary system of laws, that the one had to do with a society and people where the urban was the dominant class, and the other where this was the inferior, and the rural was the ascendent one.

We thus discover that, in the defensive and protective necessities of an agricultural and pastoral people that draw them into the concentrated form of towns and cities, there exists the germ that if not wisely restrained may develop into an undue militant power, that may indeed bring present but temporary weal, but is more certain to cause ultimate and lasting woe to the people. This same protective necessity, perhaps aided by the legacy of the warlike spirit of her founders, grew into that masterful, martial sentiment that per-



vaded the public mind, bringing a transient glory and success, but also the everlasting ruin of the Roman nation.

Having pointed out some of the fundamental and chief causes that operate to create the ascendent power of the cities, it would be a needless elaboration to trace the influence of a multitude of less conspicuous though definite contributive causes toward establishing this unequal power. But we feel that careful consideration should be given to some, that, while not so direct or distinct in their effects, still indirectly and insidiously contribute, powerfully, towards the creation of that unbalanced power of the rural and urban forces so dangerous to the security and stability of the state.

Among these silent, though active and effective, agencies, we must note those of money, manufacturing, and foreign commerce. That they are the chief instrumentalities in developing an undue preponderance of urban power is, we believe, largely confirmed by the fact that it was the specific limitations of these active creative forces of a people upon which the Spartan lawgiver depended to check the tendency of an inordinate growth of the urban element of Laconia, over which people

his laws prevailed. It is scarcely necessary to recur to the marvellous success that attended his laws for centuries as sustaining the correctness of his polity.

## VII

### MONEY, MANUFACTURING, AND FOREIGN COMMERCE

THE history of Sparta shows that an almost entire absence of an available monetary medium, such as was, and now is, held to be indispensable to realize the highest productive power of a nation, was not incompatible with the development of a people possessed of the highest virtues, happiness, and a commanding power and position beyond that attained by any of the Hellenic states.

It must be conceded that a freely circulating and efficient monetary medium may usefully contribute towards a fuller development of the resources of a nation, and facilitate a just distribution of the results of the people's productive energies. But this is accomplished only when it is, by incessant vigilance, held to the rigid performance of its special and appropriate functions. Like many useful instruments given to mankind to further their happiness, well being, and moral

growth, those possessing the highest innate capacity for greatest good when wisely and justly employed in their purity, have in their perverted form an inverse capacity to cause evil and inflict injury.

We therefore find that a circulating monetary medium, while possessing the power to further the growth of productive industries and effect a freer distribution of their fruits, can become, in the hands of those who find it to their selfish interests to so employ it, the most powerful vehicle to effect an unequal and unjust distribution of the wealth of the people.

It was, no doubt, to prevent the dangers of its perverted use among the Spartans that Lycurgus adopted that form of money which practically deprived it of its special functions, reducing it to such an unavailable medium as rendered it innocuous in the hands of the evil-minded. The visible presence of that magic power embodied in the concrete form of metallic money, no doubt serves to develop and intensify the avarice and greed of mankind. The blighting influence upon the mind and soul of man is exemplified in the inordinate passion that possesses the miser to enlarge his hoard of wealth. He no longer finds a pleasure in regarding its power of exchange, but

his sole gratification is in contemplating the material properties of his lustrous metallic hoard, losing all desire or willingness to employ it in its useful functions and power, which was the original motive that impelled him to its accumulation through deprivation and toil. It is, we believe, a just inference that the astute Spartan lawgiver sought to securely bar the corrupting growth of so fateful a passion by effectively removing from the people the baleful presence of that fetich of cupidity and greed. This he fully effected in a manner most admirable, by adopting as a monetary medium a metal whose bulk and weight, with other undesirable qualities, almost precluded its use as a circulating medium.

That the adoption of iron as this medium was voluntary, and did not grow out of necessity, is sufficiently shown by the fact that, at the time he gave his laws to Sparta, there was throughout all the nations an abundance of copper, silver, and gold, whose bulk and other attractive properties, together with their general and constant use in the arts and for articles of luxury—then as now—constituted them the most perfect form of a circulating medium available to man.

The two essential attributes of money are those of a measure of value and of a freely circulating

medium of exchange. Therefore, in the selection of such a medium, from the necessities, the extent, and the intricate conditions of trade and exchange, it must be limited to those substances that are at once the most readily available and universally acceptable. These two requisites caused mankind to early adopt those metals as a monetary medium whose utility, as well as constancy of production and possession of the greatest exchangeable power in the smallest compass and weight, rendered them most eminently suited for that purpose. We therefore in the earliest times find copper, silver, and gold performing this function, being those metals for which there was the largest and steadiest demand to meet the necessities and luxuries of life, and, at the same time, being of the most exchangeable form. All media of exchange, having no other value than that of a useful one—to meet the primary necessities of life—must in their representative value be largely in the nature of funded energies to produce them.

As all things exist in relation only, there is an essential one between a monetary medium and those things to which it stands in the capacity of a measure of their value. As this has no other basis than the average expenditure of

human energies to produce them, their relation is, in essence, that of funded energies. As in virtue of their very nature and conditions of production one represents a more uniform and constant product of labor than the other, and possesses as well cumulative attributes (a capacity wanting in the other by reason of its transitory and destructible nature), there arise in the general field of production such complex and diverse conditions as to preclude a fixed relation between a measuring medium and those things to which it is applied in that capacity.

It is, of necessity, in the quantitative relation alone that we find their reciprocal values, since the value of a circulating medium is quite as much measured by a related quantity of dissimilar products, as they themselves are measured by the quantity of a correlative medium. It is manifest that in a trade operation, in its final and completed form, it is as much the essence of it, that a given number of bushels of grain purchased a given number of ounces of gold or silver, as that the gold or silver purchased the grain.

All the products of human energy, therefore, other than those qualified as a circulating medium, in reality, as distinctly measure the value of those products of labor, suited for monetary uses, as

they are conversely measured by the monetary medium. It is evidently as valid an expression for a man to say, that his grain bought so many ounces of gold or silver, as to say that he sold so many bushels of grain. This is evident from the fact that the increase or diminution in the quantity of either in a given period is at once followed by an exact correspondence in the reciprocal purchasing power in terms of the other, in perfect accord with the respective increase or decrease in the quantity of either.

It is in the relative quantity of both products of labor (the monetary medium and those that are measured by it) that there lies the dangerous power of using either as a means of effecting a distribution of wealth not in accord with the just rights of the producers, but such as to gratify the selfish desires and avarice of individual or class. An unequal power, in such unjust use, necessarily exists in the more portable and available form of the one class of products over the other, and it is therefore more generally the practice of those predatory operations to employ the monetary medium as the agent to vary at will the value of unlike products, although the reverse operation is frequent.

It is in the capacity of both for artificial



manipulation that selfishness finds the means, and greed the opportunities. To artificially increase or diminish the quantity of either and to conveniently effect a rise or fall of value in terms of the other, with almost as much certainty as if this variation in quantity had been the result of natural causes, is daily illustrated in the money market of New York and the grain pit of Chicago. It is the increase or diminution of the readily available medium of exchange in monetary centre's (the cities) that temporarily produces an increase or decrease in the relative exchange value of all commodities throughout the nation; and, similarly, the creation of an artificial increase or decrease in the readily available quantity of agricultural products in the grain centres of the country (again in the cities) that in a like manner causes a corresponding rise or fall in the relative exchange value in terms of a circulating medium of agricultural values throughout the country. In fact, those odious manipulations of the available quantity of monetary media, or the other products of human labor, constitute in essence those abnormal excrescences on the healthy economic body known, when in a mild form, as *quick market turns*, or, when of pronounced character, as *corners*, with their predatory gains.

It must be distinctly noted, that it is in the cities alone that these manipulative methods can arise, or be successfully executed. It is therefore in the cities that all the advantages and gains due to these artificial and abnormal methods are centred with their exclusive avails; and it is upon the rural element of the nation that the injury and loss must, eventually, largely fall. It is in the cities alone that all the financial forces of the nation can be fully and adequately wielded; and whatever advantages (and they are legion) arise out of the exclusive control of this mightiest lever of trade known to man wholly accrue to them. One is almost appalled when he contemplates the possible overwhelming advantages that may be enjoyed by the cities by a corrupted use of an agent so omnipotent, and upon which the relative exchangeable values of the whole productive power of a nation depend, and by which they may be arbitrarily determined.

The pantheistic religion, with its primary definite concepts and limitations, was the primitive faith, long swaying the mind and controlling the heart of mankind, and directing the members of the human family in all the varied forms of related life. In the contemplation of the special and concrete character of supernal powers, they

saw the visible universe everywhere under the special domain of an appropriate and protective deity. The nation, and each city, had its tutelary god; the seas, the ocean, the land, and the woods, even the trees themselves, were the abode of a ruling guardian or sylvan deity.

So deeply was the human mind penetrated by the belief that there dwelt in the visible forms of nature a guiding and protective invisible power, that there arose a kindred belief that each individual was under the special care of some intangible personality, ever hovering near. Even the philosophic mind of the great Socrates was swayed more by the silent promptings of his ever attending dæmon than by his logical formulæ.

When this complicated theogony was supplanted by the simpler and purer forms of a more monotheistic faith, with its indefinite and less concrete concepts, its all-pervading, infinite, and universal essence, those beliefs in special forms of deistic power remained in the minds of men in the vague superstition that a guiding fate waits on all mankind. It is from the desire to obtain the favors of this hidden fate that ever attends the fortunes of mankind, that all organized forms of chance arise, the blind pursuit of which too often ends in an enslaving mania. This mode, so to

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speaking, of winning the benign smiles of a tutelary fate was once limited to the pure and intangible realms of chance. It has been reserved for these more modern times to extend her worship into almost all the natural and material affairs of human life.

So widely and rapidly have the rites and votaries of this mystic goddess extended and grown, that it threatens to subvert and supplant all those forms, rules, and principles of business and trade so long and so well based upon natural laws and necessities, and directed by the higher influences of pure ethical maxims and principles. In whatsoever manner we may attempt to define it otherwise, those untold millions that represent the daily speculative ventures in the world's trading marts (the cities) are in fact and essence simply offerings upon the altar of this capricious goddess—the most dangerous deity yet worshipped by man. When these great games of chance are played in the financial, economic, and industrial world, they are always to be deplored, even when rigidly confined to, and limited by, the conditions and laws that in their occult power inflexibly determine the final result. But when this may be, as it only too often is, determined by artificial conditions created by the cunning

and crafty devices of men for personal advantages, there arises such a menace to all sound and honest methods of trade as not only to vitiate the whole economic body of the nation, but to endanger and even subvert the moral life of the people.

We have shown that in all things inherently good, along with the benefits that arise to the human race by their proper and appropriate use, there inheres also, even in a larger degree, the capacity for greater abuse and misdirection of its true functions, inflicting upon mankind an aggregate of injuries in excess of the blessings wrought by them. If, as many believe, the trend of human nature is rather towards evil than good, can we regard as an unmixed blessing all those admired instruments to facilitate and multiply effort, and which have the innate capacity for greater misuse than right use, leaving in the totality of their effects greater evil than good? Is it not, therefore, a problem in the realm of ethics yet to be solved, whether there is to be a moral and intellectual advancement of the human family conformable to the increased intensity, scope, and volume of its physical activities, as the result of those aids?

Again we must point out that it is in the cities

alone that there can be exercised, fully and availably, those dangerous appliances so capable of being perverted to a local or selfish gain. Is it not predicated an unwarranted and even impossible altruism that, of the vast benefits secured to the cities by special advantages so overwhelming, an equal part would be returned to where it originated and from whence it was drawn? The history of cities does not show a development of moral character commensurate with the growth of power, wealth, intelligence, refinement, and culture. Rather the reverse; for do they not often mark that period of highest corruption and least moral coherence, in fact, a last degeneracy, which ushers in a fatal and rapid decay, extending also throughout the whole sphere of their influence? Was not Athens, at the very pinnacle of her wealth, refinement, and culture, torn by intestine strifes that arose from the contentions of two of her greatest, most powerful statesmen and purists, as to who should possess the person of a beautiful Greek youth? It is a problem for the future ethnologist to ponder, whether the world is not to become wholly an aggregate of cities. If such be the tendency, is it not an extreme chance that, with this crystallization of the human family, there will develop

also that higher ethical character necessary to its preservation?

The manufacturing and commercial activities of a nation being so closely related in their general effects upon its entire trade and industries, we will consider them in a relation of concurrent causes tending to create in the cities a power and wealth not commensurate with, or bearing a consistent relation to, all the industrial forces and energies exercised, that are germane to and within the limits of the nation. We have noted that, out of a natural and duly correlated interaction within a body of varied productive factors, there would theoretically arise, as a consequence, a stable, economic state in which exists a just communion of all its parts, the necessary result of a natural, full, and free operation of the entire creative forces of the whole people.

As a definite cause serving to create an inequilibrium of the constituent industrial members comprised in, and deranging, the well-adjusted parts of an economic body, we will consider the effects of extending the internal forces beyond the limits of the nation itself. This will, as you may apprehend, involve in its scope an inquiry into

the general relation of one people, as a whole, with another. Further, it is but to trace those causes and influences that operate to carry the industrial energies, hitherto regarded as confined to the nation only, into spheres beyond those heretofore engaging our attention.

In the field of human production, the ultimate and definite result of all interchanges and exchanges is, in fact, simply that of the special products of labor, each final one being determined by what is found to be productive of the greatest mutual benefits. Thus it is possible, as you must perceive, that there may arise between two or more nations, through a naturally developed efficient means of intercourse, a like trade-relation between them, wherein the free and unobstructed exchange of their respective products may be effected, on such terms and under such conditions, as to realize even a larger reciprocal benefit than that which would have been derived had such exchanges been made within their own domestic spheres. So long as the trade relations between separate nations subsists from normal laws and causes, there can be no disturbance in the harmony and equal adjustment of the internal parts of either, as all being alike favorably affected, their correct balance will in no wise be unsettled, but



fully maintained. It is in the spirit of self-aggrandizement, that seems to possess and control all mankind, prompting him ever to realize a personal advantage at the general expense, that we can trace the true impulse that causes him to seek individual gain by deflecting the natural forces of trade and industry into artificial and special channels. Those trade-laws, therefore, that in the integrity of their influence and operation produce only mutual benefits to all the internal interests of the respective nations, can become by their corrupt exercise the most powerful instrument of selfishness to effect an unjust and unequal distribution of the fair rewards of domestic labor. The diversion of the laws of exchange from their proper or natural channels, that operate only for the general good of all alike, into the special service of individuals or classes, can be effected solely by a dominant, arbitrary, and interested political power in the state, as no class can be conceived of as voluntarily imposing disadvantageous laws, disabilities, and restraining conditions upon itself. We have seen how, in the very nature of the concentrated form of mankind in cities, there evolves a superior political power in those nations where agriculture is carried on in its more primitive forms. So great is this

crystallized power in the cities, so vital are its concentrated energies, that a supreme sovereignty in the economic affairs of a nation may be attained by the cities; and this, too, even where the agricultural and rural element may far transcend, in numbers and importance, the combined urban element of the nation. Even more; this may occur when this more virile and active urban power is translated into legislative enactments that operate to the direct manifest benefit of the urban, and as directly to the injury of the rural portion, so great becomes the power of the demagogue.

It is proper to here point out the specific effects of laws that operate to the advantage of special interests and classes, by and for whose benefit they were enacted. Following the same essential tendency of natural laws that govern and direct an equable material distribution within the nations themselves of labor's products, there is in their free action a like distribution of these products of one nation with another. This, we have seen, may be productive of mutual advantages between the nations when their intercourse is governed by mutual and just trade-relations. By the concensus of many special and acquired advantages facilitating production (and intrinsic

in the several nations), it is possible for different nations to produce those things, by the mutual exchange of which, each may realize a special benefit. It is in the obstruction of the free action, and the diversion from their proper legitimate channels of the distributive forces of trade for distinct and specific advantages, that there have grown up those disturbed relations in the internal productive energies and factors of the two greatest commercial nations that may ultimately test the vitality of their governments.

We will trace at greater length and detail the nature and extent of these influences in the one, since the other is affected in a less degree by the same equally definite, though less complex, causes. In doing this, we will take occasion to point out how exceptional natural conditions may become the indirect agency whereby a more marked and inequable distribution of the internal forces of a people may be artificially accomplished.

## VIII

### TRADE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN tracing the development of the industrial affairs of the United States, we find that, during the whole history of the country down to the middle of the last century, their advance was measurably under no limitations or aids, save those imposed or yielded by natural laws and advantages.

In virtue of the special, and in some manner distinctive, nature of the products of the soil, which alone could meet the world's wants and necessities, she was guaranteed a full demand and absorption of any possible supply. The agricultural interests of the United States, therefore, became and remained the paramount one, as it ever must be where normal trade and productive conditions are permitted to prevail. To the domestic demand for those special products of her lands there being added, by the inherent necessities of other countries, a steady and large foreign

demand, it gave to the agriculture of the United States such predominance in the industrial affairs of the nation as could not have been acquired had not some of the products been of a peculiar, even exclusive, character. As there had, as yet, not grown up any discriminating legislative measures or other factitious influences, the relation of the agricultural to the other industrial and productive forces of the state was a natural and, therefore, an equable one. This coequal relation of agriculture to the whole body of production continued so long as no discriminating laws were permitted to influence, by their partial action, any of the productive powers of the entire national energy.

As might be inferred, we therefore discover that the growth of the urban and rural sections respectively, during that period, was, *pari passu*, at an even pace with that of the entire country. This just equilibrium of the various cardinal factors of trade and industrial forces of the nation was securely perpetuated by the fact that, prior to the Civil War, the consolidated agricultural interests of the South being joined with those of the North (then possessed of large legislative force), there was created an effective bulwark in the legislative halls of the country against the encroach-

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ment of the urban power, that later broke out with such violence and with effects so serious to the agriculture of the whole country.

The composition of the legislative power in the United States was, therefore, in 1860, much the same as at the present time exists in the law-making power of France, which so effectively preserves that well-balanced relation of all her cardinal industrial interests. The limits to the growth of her agriculture were those imposed by nature only,—the quality of the soil, the facility with which the cultivable area of lands could be extended, and a demand for its products. There did not exist, in the United States, that impediment which so seriously obstructed the expansion of agriculture in other new countries arising out of an effective occupation of lands by a numerous, militant, and indigenous people. The sole problem was how rapidly man could, by his efforts, effect a conquest of those obstacles that nature interposed, being mainly the perennial forests that covered the lands which were to be the field of his future operations.

We have here to point out a conjunction of the most powerful causes that can operate to produce an unequal apportionment of the industrial rewards of a people, one being natural and the other

artificial in character. It has been noted that, where the urban and rural sections develop alike under nature's limitations only, there is, as an essential result, corresponding, definite, and fixed relations between them.

During the greater part of the history of the United States, the growth of her agriculture was determined by the rapidity with which the small strips of fertile land, that lay as a narrow border along her watercourses, and the larger areas covered by primal forests, could be reclaimed and reduced to the uses of man. But as these conditions were general throughout the country, as well as universally uniform and constant, the progressive growth of agriculture was, in like manner, of a regular and uniform character. As the mutually dependent urban interest could expand in an equal ratio only, there could be no sudden or radical accessions of growth possible in either, such as was calculated to disturb the order of that fixed relation which subsisted between them.

It was in the middle decades of the last century that there suddenly arose that coincidence of exceptional conditions, both natural and artificial, the combined abnormal influence of which dislocated all those forces of production and

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exchange, the outgrowth of centuries of labor on natural lines. This resulted in a distribution of wealth, vicious in nature, and of a character inimical to a just co-ordination of the nation's productive energies.

In the steady westward march of agriculture in the United States, its advance was, as we have seen, retarded by the uniform impedimenta under which it developed and which impeded its progress, until it reached the eastern confines of the great plains and prairies of Illinois, which presented unique characteristics hitherto unknown to the agriculturists. The farmer of the East, in his life labors, being familiar with those conditions where he found his reward only in the conquest of the forest, looked with amazement on the illimitable sea of open fertile lands ready to receive his labor, stretching in billowy forms indefinitely before him. His hesitation to advance into regions so singular and in such marked contrast with a lifelong experience was akin to that of the mariner, who, on the shores of an unknown sea, pauses ere he commits himself to the undiscovered perils beyond. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that the early settlers of the great prairies of Illinois first sought the watercourses, with their narrow belt of timber, even as their fathers



before them from the East, sought the valleys of the Scioto, the Miami, and the Wabash.

But this was only momentary; for, with the passing of his illusions and fears, and with the active aid of the Government by liberal grants, subventions, and other special favors, there was speedily wrought a marked transformation throughout the vast fertile domain, as if by the magician's wand. The wide expanse of prairie lands was ready to yield its hidden and hoarded wealth to the eager touch of man. Railways and other means of transportation quickly threaded this entire region, burdened with its latent wealth. Cities arose as if spontaneously springing from the soil, and myriads of farms covered in the briefest time the recently unproductive waste, the home only of the buffalo and the Indian. The astonished agriculturist of the East saw created, almost in a day, as if by magic, farms of greater productive capacity than those that required generations of patient toil to produce under the conditions he had hitherto uniformly encountered.

In other directions, this rapid development of agriculture produced effects direct, immediate, and decisive. It quickened the cities and cognate manufacturing centres into an unaccustomed activity, to supply the new demand for the material

needs of this sudden expansion; it vivified and enriched the centres of finance and capital, and the arteries of transportation throughout the nation throbbed with a congested flow of a remunerative traffic. This gave to the urban interests, as a whole, such stirring activity, such rapid accessions of life and industry as had never been witnessed or could have been anticipated as possible in the previous history of the slow, though steady, march of agriculture.

But the farmer of the East, who saw his small holdings slowly expand for more than a generation by a yearly addition of only a few acres, carved through patient toil out of the surrounding forest, was dismayed at the fatal result foreshadowed in an unequal contest wherein his own little farm, burdened with generations of accumulated investment, was to be arrayed against the broad, fertile acres of one who acquired his holdings at a nominal cost, and whose further investments were fully represented by the rude hovel in which he dwelt, and by the few implements with which he tilled the soil.

From this vast and abrupt increase of agricultural productive power, there followed an effect signal and far-reaching. The speedy enrichment of the cities, through the interests

peculiar to them, by this sudden augmentation of the nation's agriculture, caused them to look wistfully for other and larger fields in which like reserve resources existed, whereby there might be renewed, even in a more successful manner, that experience they had enjoyed in the sudden development of the prairie and plain lands of Illinois, redounding so powerfully to their special and direct advantage.

Again, they found their opportunity in the almost boundless plain and prairie regions, stretching beyond the Mississippi River, in whose vague and indefinite compass there lay, in the soil, stores of fabled wealth awaiting only their electric touch to yield again a golden reward by its bounteous outflow. Nor did the event fail to confirm their most extravagant expectations. By government explorations and surveys there was, in little time enough, revealed a region that, for extent and fertility of soil, far surpassed their most florid dreams, and was scarcely realized even by the pioneers that trecked their way across its trackless waste toward the gold fields of California.

Defined briefly, it is a contiguous area of land that for extent, richness of soil, physical characteristics favoring the speediest reclamation, and

capacity for varied products, finds no parallel on the globe. Generally speaking, it extends from the Canadian territory to the Gulf, and indefinitely towards the Rocky Mountains, far towards the limits of the Temperate Zone in the North, and almost to its borders in the South. In the southern portion, therefore, the culture of cotton reaches its greatest perfection throughout a large area. In the middle and northern portion, the winter and spring varieties of wheat find their true and congenial home, and there is contained within its ample compass perhaps one third of all the possible Indian-corn lands on the globe. Throughout its whole area, varieties of other cereals grow in profusion, and the less cultivable lands were covered with a rich and exuberant herbage. It is small wonder, therefore, that with an avidity electrified by a quick and rapid enrichment that flowed from the more limited prairies of Illinois, the cities should cast covetous eyes upon a domain possessing latent potentialities of an almost exhaustless wealth, and so rich in opportunities for special and individual aggrandizement.

## IX

### DEVELOPMENT OF TRANS-MISSISSIPPI LANDS

THE unparalleled rapidity with which this marvellous region was developed, causing so great a commotion in the industrial and financial atmosphere of the United States, and in only a less degree in other nations, marks what is perhaps the one startling economic phenomenon of modern times. As such, it should be critically considered, to trace not only the varied causes leading to this development, but the entire course of its vital, disturbing influence that swept with such violence over the whole field of established industry. This inquiry, for the purposes we have in consideration, can be covered by a period extending from 1860 to the beginning of the present century. This embraces not only the inception of this mighty wave of accelerated production, but the equally wondrous evidences of its full fruition.

Before the middle of the last century, the United States, as a producer of cereals and other food

supplies, though trivial as compared with what it later attained, was limited, as we have noted, in its operations and growth, to the small but steady increment of swamp and valley lands—of limited area—and the great forest tracts that covered the country. This, under the active and diligent energy characteristic of the free spirit of a pioneer people, was always greater than that necessary to meet domestic requirements, thus leaving a margin of surplus to find a foreign market.

Happily for this overflowing region, England some twenty years before had so amended her fiscal system as to permit a freer importation of food and kindred products from other countries; the direct effect of which, also, was to cause a rapid increase in her domestic wants. The production of this surplus being, however, under the rigid limitations of steady, constant conditions and natural causes, as we have pointed out, the domestic and foreign necessities for food and other products of the soil being, likewise, under similar natural restrictions, this surplus finding a foreign market at the time could in no wise seriously disturb the sound inter-industrial status of other nations, or any thus dependent upon an unhampered state of international intercourse. There was, in consequence, no tendency, in the excess of agricultural

products, to cause an unbalanced development of wealth and power between the rural and urban interests at home, or within the nations with whom our trade was thus carried on.

As this exceptional and hitherto impossible increment in the products of the soil throughout the United States was primarily dependent upon the ease and rapidity with which this gifted region could be brought under the dominion of man, it will be well to consider the many causes that severally, in their concert of action, produced that miraculous output of agricultural products, especially food, that marks the history of that prolific region. It is worthy of note, as a curiosity in the economic affairs of mankind, that had there existed upon this same area of lands the like distribution of forests that covered those east of the Mississippi River, excepting in Illinois, it would have been the labor of many centuries, as it was in the East and South, instead of a few decades, as it was in the West, to place them to the same extent in a suitable state of culture.

It was to the absence of this usual and prime impediment to the progress of husbandry that was solely due that cyclonic material advance in the United States, during the past sixty years, that has dazed alike the financier and economist. To

this seemingly inefficient cause can be assigned the many marked economic disturbances that have prevailed even among European nations, having given a force and emphasis to many fiscal laws, not foreseen and much beyond the purpose of their advocates. Thus, in the abolition of the corn-laws of Great Britain, there were at that time no conditions in sight which could cause that devastating overflow of cheap agricultural products from other lands, that wrought during the past forty years such dire havoc in her domestic husbandry, with the consequent wide and radical shiftings in her internal economic and industrial affairs.

Although free from this greatest deterrent to the expansion of cultivable lands, the concurrence of many contributive influences was yet essential to realize that rapid development of them which stands as a marvel in the whole history and experience of agriculture. These were found in the exceptional ease with which they could be converted from a state of nature to a domestic one, the prompt forthcoming of an adequate population to effectively occupy the lands, and the requisite capital to carry on the needed process of development. These were, so to say, the creative and constructive factors of the problem. There yet remained those connected with the no less



important question of finding a market commensurate with the supply of products so suddenly and largely augmented. The easily and cheaply constructed railway system, the result of favoring physical conditions and characteristics of the country, rapidly ramified every part of the whole territory, supplying ample facilities for the drainage of its plenteous products from all its centres, and also their ready delivery to the Eastern and other centres of consumption, and to the ports of export as well. This requisite increase in consumptive power both at home and abroad, to meet the ever-increasing abnormal supply, was thus fully assured by the combined agencies of communication and distribution with which this region was speedily endowed.

These many concurring conditions, enabling a minimum of cost to be attained, were assembled in that region to a degree hitherto unknown, and that existed in no other part of the globe. Even more, it is scarcely possible for such exceptional conditions to ever again arise in the history of agriculture. Such were these united advantages, that the products of this favored region could be offered to the consuming world at prices that, in many cases, proved fatal to home products and those in other countries. A few conspicuous facts

may serve to elucidate an economic state that grew up as a consequence of these causes (of an exceptional character), in which we find, as a direct result, the impoverishment and even ruin, in some sections, of this most important industry; but at the same time there arose to opulence another industrial class.

To illustrate this paradoxical economic state that grew out of the special influences enumerated, we will begin at the decade of 1870, as at that period the combined productive agencies became extensively diffused throughout that region, and their effects began to be sensibly felt. By authentic statistical facts, we find that from 1870 to the beginning of the present century, a brief period of thirty years, there was produced within the limits of the region we have in consideration a volume of food staples largely in excess of the entire quantity produced in the nation during the whole period of its existence down to 1870. To realize, in its fullest measure, the radical and serious effect upon the economic affairs of the whole nation of the abrupt outpouring of this vast latent wealth that enriched this region, with its direct bearing especially upon its industrial interests, we have to consider that in this short period there was flooded upon the world the equiv-

alent of what would have been the possible production only of centuries in our country, under the previous normal conditions.

In the tumult and confusion thus engendered in the hitherto well-adjusted interests of the nation, there naturally emerged many favorable opportunities for class and privilege. Some idea may be formed of their deranging effects upon the internal and duly related interests of other nations, also, when we realize the phenomenal increase in the volume of exports, the outgrowth of the sudden and excessive production of this prolific region. Statistics inform us that the total exports of our food staples, within the thirty years from 1870 to the beginning of this century, were many times greater than the total of like exports during the whole life of the nation down to 1870. We will consider some of the specific and direct results produced in the general field of our own national industry by a condition so singular, wherein a sudden and phenomenal supply was met by an equally prompt and full demand.

The first and most notable effect was felt upon the general agriculture of the country itself. Thus, it is noted that a steady decline in the price of food-products set in, so that at the beginning of the present century they were found to have

been in many cases less than half the prevailing price prior to this inundation of supply. As some measure of its effects also upon foreign agriculture, it is to be noted that, in the case of the important food staple, wheat, the price steadily declined to less than twenty-four shillings the quarter, in England, from that of an average former range of forty-five to sixty shillings per quarter.

An effect, quite as direct, distinct, and disastrous, of this fall in price of food-products, was promptly reflected in the painfully manifest decline in farm values, vested or otherwise, in the older agricultural regions, especially those located in the East. These, with their long accumulated burden of investment, where cost of production was at its maximum (albeit in harmony with that of other correlated industries), were suddenly confronted with the new condition where a mere nominal investment and a minimum cost of production created a competition wholly beyond their power to successfully meet. As in all other industrial operations, the net result being the very soul and governing principle, animating energy and awakening the hope of reward, the ratio of profit in the end determines the amount of capital that can be maintained by it. There

followed, therefore, as a consequence of this decline in price of products, a marked reduction in all vested values in those less fortunate regions of agriculture, to harmonize with the values in the more fortunate and favored regions. This led, in the older districts of husbandry, to a drastic revision of all vested farm values, and in some cases their utter and complete extinction. It was thus that we became familiar with that anomalous spectacle of abandoned farms in what were, only recently, highly prosperous agricultural sections in the East.

In some foreign countries, also,—such as England, which permitted the full force of a cruel and relentless, though unforeseen, competition to fall upon her agricultural interests,—there was a marked decline in the values of farms that were once prosperous in the highest degree. This fatal decline exists largely, both in England and the United States, even to this day.

So great was the unbroken flow of nature's bounties from this favored Trans-Mississippi region, that the producer also became a sufferer from the very plethora he himself created. He was often oppressed by the excess of his own products, which from their superfluity became at times possessed of so little food value, that he was

driven either to sustain a total loss in their decay, or to commit them to other, though limited uses.

The problem, therefore, set by necessity for the early occupier of these lands was whether he could maintain that meagre margin of life left in the severe conflict of its contending forces until such time as the world's population would again restore the fixed harmony of normal supply and demand, and thus cause an advance in the price of his lands in which, alone, he was to find the net rewards of his toil and privations. This would be in time assured him, since it is of nature's order that a rapid increase in the human family follows a like increase in means of subsistence, which more than half of mankind is fated to find directly and solely through its personal labor upon the soil. This, alas, often came too late, for the labor-worn pioneer ended his life of toil and struggle that, in despite of his self-denial, left him no margin of net gains. In the solution of this problem he was, in the nature of things, even driven to seek support from sources other than lay in his own resources of labor. The eager lenders of the nation's financial centres were ever ready and willing generously to supply relief by a loan, with crushing usury.

It might, in truth, be averred that the net out-

come of the mighty army of toilers that first occupied the lands of this great territory (after years of patient waiting and labor) was almost wholly represented by the increased value of their lands, subject to a substantial abatement of the fixed charges with which they were compelled to burden themselves in the way of loans upon them. Although they obtained these lands either as a gift from the Government, or at a mere nominal price, so great was the stress ever upon them that the fruits of their labor rarely met their frugal wants that remained after a heroic practice of self-denial and its accompanying deprivations. So onerous were these, especially in the earlier days, as to pass the ability of the city dweller to conceive, or his fortitude to endure.

The almost uniform record of their experience shows that, for many years, their expenses exceeded the value of their products by reason of abnormally low prices, due to excessive production. It would therefore seem that it was not the cultivator of the soil, but the usurer, the manufacturer, the transportation company, in fact the urban and cognate interests, that derived almost the sole net benefits that accrued from his labor upon the lands.

We must here point out an indirect and remote

injury that resulted from the excessive culture of these lands, which must be taken into account in the general reckoning as to final results. We have seen that, by reason of the advantages of physical conditions, a vastly greater amount of land could be reclaimed by the same expenditure of labor and capital on them than could have been accomplished under the conditions that had hitherto deterred the growth of agriculture. Even without the use of the same improved mechanical appliances, those natural advantages would have brought sufficiently disastrous consequences to the farmer in the way of over-production, with its ruinous depression of prices. But at the same time the ingenuity of man fortified, by special implements, his labor, and vastly augmented his products. Not only did this cause the farmer to unduly extend his cultured area, with its depressing excess of output, but it has caused that perceptible depletion of the soil throughout that once great storehouse of rural wealth, which has already awakened alarm among the more observant economists identified with the interests and future of that section, which is so vitally related to the prosperity of the whole country.

Thus, what at near view seemed a blessing to the agriculturist was, in fact, an instrument that



insidiously wrought an injury, both immediate and remote; as, by the very superabundant results of his labor, he depressed the current value of his products, and at the same time he drew needlessly upon the virgin fertility that lay in the excessive area he cultivated, which should have remained as a resource to himself and the nation. By this you discover how, in their initial and immediate effects, what seem benign auxiliaries to man's efforts may, in fact, be the means of working not only an immediate but remote injury to himself. Yet so strangely is mankind intoxicated by the impatient spirit of haste, in this superficial age in which change and progress are confounded, that all teleological reflections are not only severely decried, but vigorously condemned. Nevertheless, is it not almost a daily revelation that, in all things human that have run a completed course, what was once heralded as a conserving and constructive virtue proved, in the end, a disintegrating and destructive evil?

Again I must remind you, that a marked disturbance of a long-developed and established order and harmony is usually productive of serious evils, the violence of which is in proportion to the sudden and radical nature of the change.

It was under these new, extreme, and abnormal conditions we have depicted that the price of food-products, especially, was fixed for a large section of mankind, which produced alike in the older communities of the United States and in other nations conditions such as they were wholly unable to successfully meet. We indulge in no fanciful or idle speculation when we inquire what would have been the final result, and the real effect upon manufacturing and non-agricultural affairs of the nation, had they been directly and similarly stimulated by governmental aid and resources into the same unnatural and exaggerated state, with its deadly internecine competition. What would have been the result of such unwise and direct aid is sufficiently shown by the unbalanced and unstable state in which we now find them, through the casual support they have received from the Government.

Viewing the rural economy of the nation in its entirety, despite its rapid expansion in the West (which came as an indirect windfall to the urban interests), there could be but little total increase of vested values in the whole; since, whatever may have been the increase in one section, there followed as a consequence an inverse and corresponding decline in older communities, a loss

that the recent rise in price of the world's food-products has as yet only partially redressed. This is shown by a critical study of statistics; for in them we discover that, while there was everywhere an advance in vested agricultural values in even pace with those of a non-agricultural nature, before the middle of the last century, we find them thereafter rapidly descending to a mere moiety of their former ratio of gain, while those of an urban character as rapidly increased by leaps and bounds.

## X

### GROWTH OF AGRICULTURE AND CITIES

WE find in 1900, after a period of thirty years of the greatest activity and expansion of husbandry, that the value of agriculture throughout the nation represents a ratio of gain not only insignificant compared with that prior to 1860, but far below that of the increase of population during that period. The urban and related interests, on the other hand, reveal not only a ratio of gain immensely beyond that of the increased population, but an absolute gain, the ratio of which far exceeded that shown before the middle of the last century! This difference in the relative growth, during that period, of these two great and mutually sustaining wealth-producers of the nation becomes of special and material significance when we consider that, during this time, the agricultural element greatly exceeded in numbers all others in the nation.

We must, therefore, regard the great cycle of

disturbed industrial and productive forces inaugurated and consummated by the sudden development of the vast plain region of the West, as specially resulting in a net increase of urban wealth and power, to an extent far beyond that which would have been attained had there been a natural, just, and co-ordinate distribution of all the benefits that arose out of that intense and exceptional period of industrial activity.

We have seen what were the unequal effects upon the entire body of the nation's agriculture itself, through excessive and rapid expansion of rural products. We will now proceed to consider some of the effects due to the same cause, visible in other directions. In pointing out that concurrence of various agencies and causes essential to a rapid reclamation of a large region possessed of so many rare natural advantages, we must regard railways as of the greatest moment, since it was through them that the essential speedy ebb and flow of creative activities could be effected throughout a domain so vast in extent, and so varied in character. That there was an immediate response to a necessity so vital and fundamental, is shown by the widespread system that at once sprung up.

The growth of railways in that region was ex-

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ceptional, and even more rapid than the general development of the country. Within its limits alone, there was built, in the twenty-year period from 1870 to 1890, a mileage of more than half of that constructed in the entire nation down to 1870. Among the special features that mark the many advantages that contributed to the growth and profitable maintenance of this great railway system in that territory, we must regard the character of its products as the most important, bearing directly, as they do, upon the amount of profitable tonnage they could supply, and which is so important a source of revenue to them.

Nowhere in the United States do the cereals grow in greater profusion and abundance than in the region that is the subject of our inquiry, and it is the cereal products that supply the largest and, in the end, the most remunerative tonnage. The extent of this resource, in that region, may in a measure be realized by an array of some important statistics. Of the staple cereals, oats, wheat, and Indian corn, there were produced in that territory alone over one billion tons in the twenty years between 1870 and 1890, an amount far greater than had hitherto been produced in the whole prior history of the nation. The other, though less important, products were equally

prolific in their supply. Beyond the necessities of internal distribution, there fell to the railways much the larger share to be delivered to the Eastern and other domestic consumptive centres, as well as to foreign lands.

As further bearing on the prosperity of railways in the whole country, it should be distinctly noted that, of the total surplus products of this prolific region, the far greater part found a market in the Eastern section of the country and abroad, thus necessitating its carriage through the length and breadth of the nation, giving rise to the greatest possible mileage service.

The construction of a railway system so sudden and so vast, under the special conditions and causes pointed out, developed a like excessive activity in all subsidiary industries. It must be fully borne in mind that, not only was there created in this territory a new railway mileage of an extent and with a rapidity hitherto unparalleled in railway annals, but the then existing railways received a quickening impulse and renewed energy that necessitated immediate expansion, to meet which required the additional expenditure of a fabulous wealth of capital.

To realize, in an adequate measure, the magic influence exerted upon the existing railways and

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all industrial interests of the nation, by a cause seemingly so inefficient and remote as the ready reclamation of the lands west of the Mississippi River, it may be well to seek the light of hypothesis. Let it be assumed that there had existed no great contiguous plain and prairie area west of the Mississippi River, and that there were the same impedimenta to the reclamation of the lands encountered by the cultivators of the soil eastward of that river. Under this hypothesis, the same steady, though slow, march of agriculture would have marked its progress as heretofore. It is reasonable to suppose that, in this case, no more than a mere fraction of the present railway system west of the Mississippi River would now exist, or even the present status of the railways east of that river. Even more, it is not conceivable that there would be now the same population of the nation, or the relative wealth and power of the urban portion of it. Neither do we believe it could be properly contended that the same relation would have existed between the manufacturing, trading, and capitalistic forces, on the one hand, and those of agriculture, on the other, that now exists. It might be confidently affirmed, however, that there would have been no abandoned farms or impoverished agriculturists



east of that river, but that the whole agricultural system would have presented a high and uniform prosperity that could find no parallel in the history of husbandry.

It might, moreover, though covering a vastly smaller area, be possessed of even greater total wealth than now. Best of all, there would have been preserved that just co-ordination of agricultural and non-agricultural interests and population that formerly prevailed, with its equable distribution of the fruits of labor and rewards of toil. There would have been a natural balance of all productive forces and activities, making for a higher state of social and economic life, with those conserving tendencies that would have given greater permanence and stability to our institutions and an equal, perhaps even a more, commanding position among the nations.

I desire here to dispel from your mind any thought that I regard the bounties and gifts of nature other than a blessing to man, but wish only to have you understand that the views here entertained serve to illustrate the general truth that, too often, measures, which in their essence might become a benefit, are turned into an injury to mankind by a reverse use of them. Thus, had our government so disposed of these lands, with

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their vast potentiality, in such manner as would have preserved the steady and constant ratio of growth of agriculture that had obtained in its past history, many lasting advantages would have been secured and quite as many evils avoided.

First, there would have been a due co-ordination in the growth and expansion of all the industries of the nation, securing that just relation and harmony essential to the integrity and permanence of all its productive energies and activities in their collective form. Second, there would not have been that wide disparity in the distribution of the total created wealth between the rural and urban elements that now exists, with its menace of danger in every category of national life. Third, there would yet remain to the Government, as a funded resource, a large and untouched domain of fertile lands, through the judicious distribution of which there would have been maintained, for many decades yet to come, that steady, full, and coequal development of the whole industrial body, a sure guarantee of peaceful thrift and industry throughout the nation.

Remember, it was the idle proletariat in the cities with their daily cry "bread and amusement," and not the valor of the rural Goth, that made the sack of Rome possible. Remember,

also, it was the vicious distribution of the nation's resources that created this idle and unemployed class, so long a deadly peril to the city and, eventually, to the Empire.

Under our hypothesis, does any one, at all familiar with the art of husbandry, its possibilities and limitations, believe that the same wondrous increased production of the plain and prairie regions of the West, that marked the first twenty-five years of its development, could have been realized under less than a century and a half of patient, plodding toil?

This inquiry might properly be extended beyond the borders of our own land. In such countries as England, where there was a free importation of agricultural products, the effects of this same influence are too visible and pronounced not to believe that they almost wholly determined the marked, even dual, relation that has long subsisted between the rural and urban sections of that great people.

The sudden evolution of a stupendous railway system in the United States, rendered possible only by the exceptional causes pointed out, developed in a like degree of time and extent all subordinate industries, such as manufacturing, mining, and so forth, whose reflex action gave a

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further stimulus to general railway construction. Thus, by an ever increasing plexus of interactions, there was created a body of correlated industries, having in their nature no semblance in character to those which, united, were the cause of their origin and constant support. It is, therefore, manifest that, in the act of creating those material agencies by which the latent riches of that wondrous region could be unlocked, almost the entire commercial and financial advantages and rewards arising from their production must concentrate in the more consolidated groups or forms of labor, where it could alone assume that organized character requisite to effect the desired results. As a consequence, it was to the cities, with their fraternally related industries and interests, that almost the entire commercial and financial advantages flowed, and which primarily grew out of the agricultural resources of the Trans-Mississippi region.

An effect, distinct and decisive, was at once felt in the monetary centres and affairs of the nation, especially in the Eastern portion of it. There speedily arose such a pressing demand for funds to finance the railways and other interests, that so quickly sprung into existence, as to put the monetary resources of the nation to the sever-

est test. These soon became inadequate, and recourse was had to foreign capital. This was readily obtained, as the increased agricultural exports, directly created by its use, greatly strengthened the nation's credit position in foreign countries. In addition to the capital that flowed from the financial centres of the East, there were many loan agencies, located in the midst of the territory itself, to promote and facilitate its distribution.

[ The tendency of capital to flow in the direction where liberal rewards are most promising is ever natural and plentiful. No more desirable investment of capital can, upon the whole, be found than that based on fertile lands, whose steadily increasing value is assured by the ready absorption of their products, through the constant increase of the world's primary necessities. There came to the farmer of the West, all too soon, a crying necessity that sprung from the very excess of his products, giving the professional money-lender a rare harvest of inordinate gains by supplying this necessity (as did the usurer of ancient Rome to her peasantry), at rates that, in their nature and effects, only too often proved confiscatory.

The ingrained money-lending propensity of the noble or patrician class, centred mainly in

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the city of Rome, and other causes that favored this class, led to many and such radical changes in the political, economic, and civic institutions that they at last ended the commonwealth.

The odious contract form of "*nexum*," so much relied upon by the money-lending aristocracy, with its galling "*mancipium*," together with the consular "*imperium*," giving the consuls—always drawn from the patrician class—arbitrary power to, conveniently and at any season, call the peasant from his labors in the field to be enrolled in the army, established an absolutism over the peasantry and rural affairs seldom if ever wielded by the privileged classes of any other nation. This led to the most serious embarrassment in his efforts to acquire the means of subsistence from his little farm, and brought such distress in his domestic affairs as to cause the necessity of a loan, in order to repair a deficiency that resulted from an enforced absence from his farm to render service in the army. Thus the aristocratic class were enabled to create at will the necessity of a loan, which only too often placed the peasant under the most galling obligations to a merciless oligarchy, a condition of which they never failed to avail themselves.

This, at last, completely destroyed the bold

and independent peasantry which gave to Rome not only its wealth, but its warriors also, and converted agriculture into a system of patrician landlordism. Thus from that highest state of individual peasant ownership, it passed into one centralized under the control of the aristocracy of Rome, in which slave labor was substituted for the free labor of the peasantry. In passing, it may be well to note that the Roman people found in war a never-failing source and an abundant supply of slaves, for it was their cruel custom to carry those captured in battle, of whatever rank, as prisoners of war into their own country to be converted into slaves, mainly to work the estates of the patrician and senatorial classes. It is one of the blackest pages of Roman history that pictures the professional slave-dealer who always followed the Roman legions and who drove, in an enshackled and melancholy train to a hopeless doom of servitude in the fields and odious "*ergastula*" of the patrician landlords, the hapless prisoners who thus became one of the most valued fruits of victory. The peasants, who constituted the bulk of the Roman army, were thus indirectly made the instruments of their own ruin.

In fact, through the brutal force of laws and customs affecting the relations of creditor and

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debtor, and always to the advantage of the patrician, or plutocratic class, the peasants themselves were often reduced to servitude, and compelled as slaves to labor for their aristocratic creditors and masters upon the lands they once tilled as free and independent owners. As a consequence, this great industry rapidly degenerated, and the lands once so productive under free peasant ownership became insufficient under the patrician landlords, with slave labor, to supply the wants of the city, thus creating a permanent necessity to rely upon imports from other countries. It also caused the once well-employed and self-sustaining peasantry to drift into the cities, more especially Rome, and thus swell the unemployed and indigent class centred there, which later, marshalled under Marius, the Cinnae, Sulla, Pompeys, and Cæsars, subverted what was left of the liberties of the Republic, destroying even the long offending and oppressive aristocracy itself.

Where nations have imitated the example of Rome, in wantonly despoiling their own domestic agricultural interests and resources to enrich and over-populate their cities, it is only to be expected that they would similarly follow her example, and seek to maintain this unequal and inequable dis-



tribution of wealth by forcibly and wrongfully appropriating the wealth and territory of other nations. May not the ultimate fate that awaited Rome supply a warning that might be profitably heeded by those nations who seek to forcibly wrest from other nations the means necessary to perpetuate an unwise, artificial, and highly abnormal condition created within themselves, by permitting one class to appropriate from another what of right was properly its own?<sup>1</sup>

In its entirety, therefore, it would seem that it was the railways with their affiliated interests, the manufacturer with his special advantages, the money-lender of the financial centres, and the speculator with his manipulative methods, which absorbed about all the wealth that the farmer's toil directly produced in the Trans-Mississippi territory, at least during its early history.

Nor were the rich advantages reaped by the financial classes confined to that region in the West alone; for increased activity everywhere, due to the excessive demand for capital to speedily develop its resources, was indirectly felt

<sup>1</sup> Touching this and other causes that brought such evil consequences and disasters to the Roman nation, especially in its formative period, see Cicero, *Att.*, 249; Dionysius Halicarnassus, vi., 15 to 90; Plutarch's *Lives of Coriolanus and the Gracchi*; Livy, ii., 23 to 30, viii., 28, xii., 29; Appian, i., 1, 4; and the *Annals* of Tacitus, iii., 54, vi., 16-17.

in all the industries of the nation, enabling them uniformly to command abnormal rates. We must not omit to point out, as a circumstance tending to powerfully promote and increase the influence and enhance the advantages of the money-lending classes of the nation, that it was during the period when these lands were being developed, that our primary monetary medium was seriously curtailed (in fact cut in twain) by depriving one of the important factors of its monetary function. This very naturally had the effect of abnormally limiting the supply and, as a consequence, enhancing its value, at the very time when there arose an extraordinary demand; thus effectively operating to increase the power and promote the advantages of the money-lending classes, confined almost exclusively to the cities.

Relative to all this, it might be even more definitely and specially affirmed that, by a perversion of just trade and natural laws, there was diverted to the benefit of the urban element of the nation, what of right belonged to the productive energies of its rural class. Rich as were the opportunities for aggrandizement of the one class, to the detriment of the other, that lay in the abnormal conditions created by the forced devel-

opment of these lands, with their vast possibilities, a still richer award awaited the urban class, especially in the Eastern section of the nation, in a like manipulation of the external forces of distribution inhering in the nation's relations to the affairs of other countries.

In order to secure the requisite flow of population to occupy these new lands, it was found necessary to resort to artificial stimulants. Despite their rich natural endowments and many other attractive features, their development could not, by natural causes, proceed at such a pace as to meet the necessities and wants of those whose interests demanded a more rapid one. The Government was therefore solicited to supply this needed stimulant. By the easy and ever ready response in those days, Congress, by a system of grants and special favors, instituted measures that practically bestowed this matchless domain, as a gift, upon an eager subsidy-hunting class, as well as upon those who were willing to brave the toils, hardships, and privations of an early settler's life in the hope of a comfortable future home. Although a nominal price was charged to those who were able to make a direct purchase, by far the largest part of these lands was given, without cost, to those who were willing

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to comply with the easy terms of occupation. In this gift were included the subventions to railways, the mild conditions of which only required them to occupy the lands by constructing their lines through them. What was the extent of these fertile lands that passed from the Government (and therefore from the real owners, the people) to the future occupants of them, is most difficult to accurately determine. The importance of it, however, may be in some measure realized by the approximate statement, that it embraced a total area greater than that of France, Italy, and the United Kingdom combined, with a far greater and more diverse capacity of production.

To the railways alone, there was given an area that fell little short, if any, of that of all the lands of the United Kingdom, and was more than two thirds of those of France. Indeed, one single railway line, that traversed the length of one State alone, received a grant of land, the present value of which is greater than that of all the railways (and there are many) within the limits of that State. What a source of rapid enrichment these grants must have been to the eager subsidy-hunters of the Eastern cities, may be conjectured when the further fact is stated that, in virtue of the exceptional physical conditions that favored their

construction throughout these lands, railways could be built at such a minimum of cost as was not possible elsewhere in the United States. To complete this picture, wherein the Midas touch of the Government transformed the treasured wealth of these lands, and transferred it into the coffers of these favored railways, having their financial root mainly in the cities of the East, it is necessary to note that, from the very beginning, they derived from the excessive output of the soil an abundant and remunerative traffic.

From the maze of facts and statistics, the confusion and dislocation of natural economic and human laws that stand more or less clearly revealed, let us briefly recapitulate some of the salient results that have been already noted, by which we may form some definite conception of the true nature of this great problem as a whole. We have already stated, that the brief space of years from 1870 to 1890 marks the real beginning and most active period in the development of these lands. Although since that time there has been a further and important development of them, yet so striking are the contrasts, and so glaring are the disturbing effects, disclosed by this period, that we will confine our attention mainly to it.

We find that in this territory there were con-

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structed, during that period, nearly forty thousand miles of railway, approximating one half of the entire mileage constructed in the United States during that time, and nearly three quarters of the total mileage of the nation in the year 1870. Of Indian corn, during the same period, there were raised in this territory something like twenty billions of bushels, an amount almost equal to that produced in the United States in its whole history previous to 1870. Of wheat, there were produced nearly three and a half billions of bushels, over one half the total amount of this cereal raised in the United States before 1870. As to the other cereals and the grasses, it is sufficient to summarily state that they were produced in this territory in even a greater relative volume. We must not omit to mention the important fact in this connection, that the marked increase in the production and exportation of cotton during this period can be attributed almost wholly to the like greater facility with which the lands west of the Mississippi River could be reclaimed to cotton culture, as compared with those east of it.

Thus, in the year 1860, there were produced in the whole country five million four hundred and ninety thousand bales of cotton. Of this only four

hundred and seventy thousand bales were produced in the territory now constituting the States of Texas and Oklahoma. Therefore, at this time, in the older sections of the country, where the growth of cotton developed slowly, there was raised ninety per cent. of the whole. In 1900, the total production of cotton was ten million two hundred and fifty thousand bales, of which the two States of Texas and Oklahoma alone are to be credited with three million seven hundred and ten thousand bales. Thus, while the product of these two States was only one tenth of the whole in 1860, it increased with such rapidity that in 1900 it became nearly one third of the whole production of the country. It was in fact an increase in forty years, in this relatively small territory, to an amount equal to seventy per cent. of the total that the whole nation had been enabled to reach in its entire history up to 1860, and its own growth shows the astounding increase of over seven hundred per cent. during that time. As indicating, in a most pronounced manner, the capacity of rapid development of prairie and plain lands over the slower and more steady growth of those where greater impedimenta exist to limit their reclamation, we note that the increase in the latter was from five million bales in 1860

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to six and a half million in 1900, or a gain of less than one third, as against a gain of over seven-fold for the former, in the same period.

What were the effects upon our commercial and economic relations with foreign nations, through this overwhelming and sudden influence, can be realized by the avalanche of exports from the United States that followed the affluent outpouring of that prolific region. The quantity of our food products, especially, that flowed upon the markets of foreign countries, pressed to the uttermost the transportation facilities of our rapidly expanding system.

Of wheat during the twenty-year period from 1870 to 1890 there were exported over two billions of bushels, a quantity three times that of the whole exports of the nation during the entire history of the country prior to 1870. For the five-year period alone from 1880 to 1885, the exports of this cereal exceeded seven hundred millions of bushels, an amount quite equal to that exported from the earliest times down to 1870. It might be added that the exports of wheat for the thirty years from 1870 to 1900 totalled four billion six hundred millions of bushels, or six and a half times as much as had been exported prior to 1870, and an amount equal to two thirds of the total



product of this cereal in the entire nation before 1870.

Indian corn figured to the extent of one billion bushels, or an amount exceeding five times that of the entire export of this cereal in the whole previous life of the nation. Of the meat equivalents of this grain, the exports were in a similar ratio. As the food products in the older sections of the United States hardly exceeded domestic requirements, it appears that the vastly preponderating proportion of the whole volume of exports came from the new lands we have been considering, and were carried through the long intervening distance to the seaboard.

There stands, therefore, this fact as perhaps the most conspicuous and potent one in the whole history of agriculture, that, by the conflux of the many contributive causes we have recited, there was developed in that region, in less than two decades, an exportable surplus of the soil's products vastly exceeding that reached in the *world's* entire total before the reclamation of these lands began.

In this wondrous contribution to the world's consumptive supply, from this seemingly exhaustless region, it is a notable circumstance, and one of deep significance, that it was not due to any superior skill or improved methods whereby the

productive power and virtues of the soil were enhanced or even maintained, for they have instead suffered a serious depletion. It was solely due to the material agencies of distribution, and to the mechanical aids to rapidly realize upon the stored-up treasures of the soil (the accumulated wealth of ages) and to deliver them with the greatest facility to the consuming world. As the mechanical appliances employed, in virtue of their special functions, rapidly extracted and depleted, without replenishing, the productive power of the soil, already there is heard from many sources warnings as to the dangerous exhaustion of those lands once surcharged with a virgin fertility, and received by man direct from nature's own hand. The problem is already too perilously near that must engage the serious attention of the political economist and ethnologist, how a safe balance can in future be maintained between the world's conflicting capacities of production and consumption.

The many auxiliary aids to further the activities of the human race having violently unlocked the treasured up resources of nature throughout the world, and made them subservient to the immediate uses of man, regardless of future wants, have imparted a ratio of growth to the human family

in strict correspondence therewith; therefore the advance in price of agricultural products is not due to transient, limited, or local causes, but to those of a general and permanent character, extending throughout the world. It is in the tendency of the one to expand in an ever-increasing ratio, and of the other to steadily diminish relatively, that there lies much trouble ahead for mankind. As the degree of contentment, happiness, and stability of the human family is dependent on the perfection of its adjustment to the creative forces surrounding it, the wisdom is very questionable of abruptly and artificially creating abnormal and transitory conditions deranging this harmonious relation. But this is stagnation, you will say; no, on the contrary, it is in the line of true and lasting development and progress; for it is of nature's order that all things animate perpetually tend towards completer forms; not by cataclysmic leaps and bounds, but by steady and almost insensible increments. "*Natura non facit saltus.*"

In our speculations as to the law governing the rise and growth of all organic forms, we endeavored to show that their true development, stability, and integrity can be attained only where there is a just correlation and free action of their constituent parts. In the application of this law,

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we find that a proper and sound economic relation of one nation with another is determined by the free and full exchange of their respective products, created under natural, undisturbed, conditions and influences. This must of necessity be true, for everywhere in nature it is manifest that action and reaction are reciprocal and co-equal.

In considering the causes that so swiftly developed the excessive surplus products of the soil in the United States, we have shown that they were transitory and abnormal in nature; since, under purely natural influences, no such magnitude of production was possible. Being of an artificial and therefore transient nature, they were, as respects their internal and international effects, alike abnormal and tentative in character. Being such, it might, *a priori*, be expected that internal industrial and productive disturbances would result to the nation that supplied, and to the nations which received, this surplus, developed under such extraordinary and exceptional conditions. The event confirms the anticipation in the fullest and completest manner.

We will first consider their effects, in both their beneficial and injurious aspects, upon the nation that most largely fell under their malign influence.

In England, before the agitation resulting in the repeal of the corn-laws, with the exception of the disturbing influence arising from the privileges granted her agriculturists, there was (as in the United States at that time) a measurably equable co-ordination of all her productive energies, receiving her supplies from sources where special advantages of production prevailed, and giving in return her own specially created products. It was her protected agriculture, limiting the supply, and thus enhancing its value, that alone gave an artificial character to her otherwise well balanced and harmonious internal industrial relations

As has been observed, the conditions under which agriculture developed in the United States (the source from whence Great Britain most largely drew her supplies at that time) were fixed and constant in their nature. The growth of this interest, therefore, in our country could be co-extensive only with that of other related industries in the nation. After supplying the current wants of an increasing population, the natural limitations upon the expansion of agricultural products did not permit of any marked increase in exports. Hence, in the abolition of her corn-laws, the agriculturists of England stood in no immediate danger of such an invading surplus from any nation as would

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seriously affect the value of their own like products.

Still, the possible small increase of foreign supply in our own country, even under the uniform conditions of production we have noted, may have been sufficient to justify a law that established all her industrial interests upon that sound and just basis of mutual accord. That the agriculturists of Great Britain suffered in no material degree from any immediate increase of imported agricultural supplies, is shown by the imports and course of prices for nearly two decades after the repeal of the corn-laws. Could the economists of Great Britain have foreseen the condition and causes (then quite as unexpected to the Americans as to themselves) that were ere long to deluge the world with a fatal torrent of cheap products of the soil, they would have probably hesitated to submit their greatest and most honored industry to the full effects of its devastating influence. In that event, they might have adopted the policy that was pursued with such salutary results by other nations, especially by France. In that country, agriculture being the paramount industry, she ever jealously guarded that great interest against all influences that might tend to seriously impair it.

While protection, considered as an abstract

commercial proposition, cannot be regarded as in strict harmony with general causes and the larger operation of natural and trade laws; yet to safeguard the long-established order of a nation's industrial interests against the sinister effects of overwhelming conditions, essentially temporary in nature and artificially created by a forced manipulation and diversion of natural and trade laws, it cannot be held as inconsistent with the highest and fullest development of national life. Thus France, to minimize the destructive effects of a fatal though temporary flood of products, with its zero of prices, created by methods that violently wrested nature's laws from their due course, even from their very foundation, interposed the foil of such measures as effected the preservation of that industry upon which the permanent prosperity and well-being of the nation depended.

Moreover, so justly were these measures poised that, while fully effecting their prime object, they inflicted no injury upon her productive interests, nor did they in the least work an unbalanced state in the entire body of the nation's industrial activities. This is shown by the steady, co-ordinate advance of all her interests, even to this day, that has ever marked the progress of her affairs. While preserv-

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ing her great agricultural system intact from the withering effects of causes abnormal in origin and transient in nature, she has not only become one of the foremost trading and commercial, but also the *first* financial, nation of the world.

How essential to the true prosperity and permanent well-being of a nation is the preservation of its agriculture can be realized when we reflect that, with one exception only, this great industry has ever given honorable and healthful employment directly to more than half the population of the nations, and indirectly to a large portion of the remaining part.

Perhaps no more striking contrast in the whole history of industrial affairs is supplied than the national economic antithesis of France and England, as the variant result of a common incident force. While the one, preserving her agriculture against the deadly effects of a transitory and unnatural influence, saw this great industry rise and flourish in just order with all others, maintaining a healthy economic body as a whole; the other, by submitting this important industry to the full impinging force of an unnatural competition, saw, as a consequence, the rise of an ascendent urban power upon the ruins of her agriculture.



While, in the one case, we find that the ever-increasing wealth of agriculture is reflected as the most important asset in the nation's resources, in the other, as steady a decrease has to be recorded as a countervailing loss in the total economy of the nation. In an exhaustive reckoning, there is to be taken into account, along with the decline in the vested agricultural interests of Great Britain, the direct loss of a large current net gain also, during the last half-century, to which this interest was entitled; and adding to this the invisible and indirect loss to general trade arising out of the decline and stagnation of her agriculture, it becomes a question whether this loss has permanently reappeared in the unnatural increase of urban wealth sufficiently to justify an experiment that transformed in so dangerous a manner her entire industrial situation, and that at present threatens the very stability of her governmental institutions.

This inquiry comes with all the greater force now that it has become evident that these dislocating causes were in their very nature only temporary in character. Already our own country (the chief disturbing cause) is again near, and will soon arrive at, the point where the slow, steady, and plodding conditions of agriculture

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will once more prevail, such as existed before the unjust and unnatural forcing-process in the economy of our husbandry was resorted to, that enhanced the urban and affiliated interests of our nation to an unnatural and dangerous magnitude and rapidity of growth.

As the urban element of our country is far greater than it would have been if the agricultural interests had developed in the previous natural order of progression, we discover in our whole economy an unequal distribution such as imparts an instability to our national affairs. As the fixed and just correlation of the productive energies and rewards of a nation are alone compatible with its true prosperity and the stability of the state, are we not even now confronted with the difficult problem: how the necessary redistribution of all these forces can be effected?

The one efficient remedy would naturally suggest itself, seeing that the laws of our country in their partial and invidious influence caused the unbalanced relation now existing between the rural and urban elements, a reversal of this favoritism of the law should operate to restore a natural relation. Were the laws of our country for a time to favor the rural element in the same discriminating manner in which they so long favored

the urban, the cities would no doubt debouch, as if by magic, upon the country their surplus population that is now the object of so much solicitude to the philanthropist and economist. Although this would possess the element of both justice and restitution, it could not receive the countenance of those who love equity in all things, since it would contain the revolting principle that one industry or interest could properly be made to prosper at the expense of another.

A nearer and divinely appointed remedy is at hand, one that would receive the sanction of an unbiased judgment, and the approval of an unblinded conscience. Let not our laws seek by special aids to repair a wrong; let them simply remove the disabilities that weigh down one interest to the benefit of another. In other words, open that fair field of equality and right of action, where merit, industry, and thrift alone are ever to be the measure of individual rewards. A nation blessed beyond precedent with the plentiful bounties of nature should, of all others, be able to safely entrust with confidence its destinies to the unsubsidized efforts of its citizens, and to the free operations of those just laws that God has implanted in trade.

Before tracing the many direct effects of these

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laws in our country, as revealed by special results, we will continue to further point out those of a definite character produced by them in other countries.

We have before stated that it was not until 1870 that the combined productive artificial appliances and agencies began to work their marked results, which quickly culminated in that torrential and fateful overflow, so formidable to the established agricultural interests of our own and foreign countries. This continued in an unabated progressive ratio, and began to decline only in the earlier years of the present century. The final termination is evidenced by the steady and rapid advance in value of all agricultural products, until they have reached the significant high level of present prices. In fact, as our country, after its period of artificial disturbance, is again returning to a natural and normal condition, is not this rise in prices of the soil's products only such as might reasonably be expected when abnormal and transitory influences ceased to depress agricultural values?

As there seems no good reason to believe that this rise is not a natural one and will not indefinitely continue, we may consider it the dawn of a new era in our country, in which many violent

political and economic conflicts are likely to occur.

Of all the perishable products of human labor, wheat stands in the most constant and steady ratio to it. In considering the effects of our exports of the soil's products upon the internal industrial forces of other nations, we will therefore take this cereal as an index-factor in our endeavor to work out general effects and specific results.

As the agriculture of our country, as a whole, had not advanced until 1870 in any marked or radical ratio of increase, being still a measurably uniform and steady growth, there could not as a consequence arise any serious disturbance in the internal economic affairs of other nations through any possible volume of our exports.

Accordingly, we find that for ten years prior; and the twenty years subsequent, to the repeal of the corn-laws, the average variations in the price of wheat in Great Britain were confined to a few shillings a quarter, and were mainly those that would result from the yearly variations in the natural conditions of production. At once, however, upon the beginning of the period of our excessive exports, there followed a rapid reduction of values, reaching for the whole term of

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thirty years from 1870 to 1900 an average decrease of sixteen shillings per quarter, or fifty cents per bushel.

As the farmers of Great Britain produced during this time something over two and a half billions of bushels of wheat, there thus fell upon them in that period the appalling loss, from this crop alone, of over a billion and a quarter of dollars. That we are entitled to regard almost the whole decline as representing a net loss is manifest, since, at the prevailing prices before the decline began, it is impossible to assume that their net profits were anything like that amount on the relatively small acreage devoted to that cereal. As the acreage given to that crop in Great Britain was less than one tenth of that devoted to other products that came directly or indirectly within the range of a like fatal foreign competition, one can form some feeble idea of that stupendous total that represents the loss of the British agriculturists during that period concurrent with the development of the plain and prairie lands of the Trans-Mississippi region, with its formidable surplus volume of cheap products.

As illustrative of that eternal persistence and equivalence of all things, we will consider how like causes produce unlike effects upon bodies of

a variant character, and point out how this same competitive influence operated to directly impoverish one great industry, and as directly and even more powerfully to enrich another.

We find that, during the period we are considering, the average urban population in Great Britain was sixty-six per cent. of the total population, or in round numbers twenty-four millions. As this includes only those that live in towns above two thousand inhabitants, there can properly be added to that total quite a percentage living in towns under two thousand inhabitants, that by habit and interest might be strictly classed as urban. We believe that twenty-six millions might be taken as not an impossible number, leaving quite a margin of population having pursuits neither essentially agricultural or urban in character.

We find also that during this period the per capita consumption of wheat was six bushels, and the average total population being thirty-six millions, this implies an annual consumption of two hundred and sixteen millions of bushels from 1870 to the beginning of this century. For the entire nation, therefore, there was a reduction in cost, in this cereal alone during thirty years, of over three billions of dollars, had the same price obtained that prevailed, as is probable it

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would have, in the period from 1840 to 1870, a period when artificial influences had as yet not vitiated production in a material degree, and agricultural values were still measurably determined by natural laws and causes. The exclusive urban class was therefore saved during this time, in this one item of expense alone, nearly one and one third billions of dollars.

It will be difficult to regard this sum in any other light than, in a large measure, an involuntary contribution of the fruits of agricultural labor to the direct enrichment of the cities. When one reflects that this special and direct contribution to the opulence of the cities was greatly exceeded by that arising indirectly out of the far larger and more varied products of the farmer, it ceases to be a subject of wonder that, while the farmer of Great Britain hopelessly struggled under an ever-growing burden, there sprang at the same time into existence, as if by magic, myriads of millionaires in the cities.

It may be well to consider what figures have further to say touching this great question, and what the lesson may be that they teach. We find that in 1850, a time when discriminating influences had as yet not embarrassed agricultural operations,



there were engaged in agriculture, in England and Wales alone, one million nine hundred thousand persons. From this time, as it neared its catastrophe, there was a small but steady decline until 1865, when it swiftly descended to nine hundred and eighty-eight thousand in 1900, having lost nearly one million in less than a half century, and that, too, during a time that agriculture rapidly expanded in all other countries. At the same time, the urban population of Great Britain grew from thirteen and one half millions in 1860 to twenty-nine and one half millions in 1900, or a total increase of sixteen millions in forty years. As the increase of total population from 1860 to 1900 was eleven and one half millions, it is evident that the cities not only absorbed the whole increase, but drew heavily from the fixed agricultural element also. And why not, since during this time there indirectly poured, from an ever depleted agriculture, a ceaseless stream of fertilizing financial blood into the cities?

After a half century of dire experience, it seems that England has awakened to the fact that the policy of her corn-laws was, upon the whole, a mistaken one. This is signally evidenced by the fact, that the very same class that once advocated and

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defended that policy is now as vigorously condemning it, and parading the virtues of those nations that preserved their agriculture, by protecting it from foreign and other competition.

## XI

### AGRICULTURE IN FRANCE

FROM this sombre picture of British agriculture, let us turn to its brighter aspects, as displayed in France. As of the utmost significance, we must first note the important fact that during the first period of thirty years, between 1840 and 1870, the average price of wheat in France was forty-seven shillings per quarter; while for the second period, from 1870 to 1900, the average price was forty-five shillings per quarter, a difference of only two shillings, or about six cents per bushel, for the whole period of sixty years. What gives emphasis to this paltry variation in price during that time in France is, that the last thirty years coincided with that period of cyclonic production in our own that caused, in other countries, the most violent and extreme variations in the price of this cereal.

During the first thirty-year period, the fluctuations in the price of this grain in France were due

to the difference in conditions and vicissitudes of production, which were measurably determined by natural causes. The regularity of price prevailing in France, during the second thirty-year period, can be accounted for only by the effective measures which that country employed to preserve her agriculture from the injurious effects of an extensive and unnatural foreign competition. Thus while France, by her protecting care, preserved this great industry almost intact from violent shock, Great Britain, by subjecting her agriculture to its full impinging force, spread devastation throughout the whole range of her hitherto prosperous husbandry.

What would have happened to agriculture in France by following Great Britain's example, a few figures will clearly reveal. From 1870 to 1900, the total production of wheat in France was nearly eight billions of bushels. Had there been the same ratio of decreased value as resulted in Great Britain from the unobstructed foreign competition she permitted, the loss of the French farmer would have been not far from four billions of dollars upon this cereal alone, during that time. Counting the six-cent decline during that period as purely the result of this competition, despite the protective measures investing her agriculture,

there would remain as a net balance in the value of this crop alone, during that time, of three and one half billions of dollars, as the result of the conserving policy of the French Government.

As in Great Britain, so in France, a far larger total of the soil's products was still liable to the influence of foreign competition, the same as that of the cereal we have chosen. Great as was this benefit in the special instance shown, it must have been vastly augmented, swelling to an almost incalculable whole the blessings that the agriculturists of France received from the defensive and preserving policy against a danger arising from transitory and unnatural conditions that must of necessity have a transient existence.

The rapid rebound and advance, in recent years, throughout the world in the price of products hitherto directly affected by those conditions, point to the welcome fact that their vicious effects are already on the wane, and are destined soon wholly to cease, when this greatest of all industries will once more be left to the sole direction and equable operations of natural laws and conditions.

As evidence of the wholesome and just character of its protective measures, we find that throughout the whole French economy there were no in-

equalities created in its cardinal interests and industries. In fact, the very spirit of these protective measures was, not to create new and, therefore, tentative conditions of trade and industry, but to maintain the long and well-established order of the old. The existing economic condition of France, therefore, is simply what it would have been had there never risen that heretical doctrine that man can, to his advantage, hasten nature's processes by artificially and forcibly deflecting her laws,—a doctrine that has worked such fearful havoc in the political and economic status of some nations that have recklessly applied it. Destroy these laws he cannot, but in his infinite impotence he can divert them to his own injury.

As a signal illustration of the two aspects in which organic bodies can be viewed—that of a due correlation and action of their integral and constituent parts, and that of their inharmony of relation—France and Great Britain supply the most extreme and conspicuous examples in their respective spheres of economic life. In France, we find a carefully and well-poised relation of all industrial and productive factors and energies through judicious conserving laws, such as render her immune to the infection of artificial extraneous influences, thus creating that vitality,

stability, and solidity of her whole economic fabric that make her the envied of all nations. The reality of this superior industrial productive power of this nation is conspicuously shown by the frequent calls upon her for financial aid and relief by other nations, whose brilliance of industrial achievements has brought them inevitable disorder. In the past three decades, these organic derangements of nations, caused by the disturbance of the healthful correlation of their internal parts, have been only too frequent and violent in character. Being herself immune to serious industrial disorders, these afflicted nations uniformly throw themselves upon France for financial support, which she alone can and does freely render, solely for the reason that she ever maintains that just co-ordination of all the productive and creative factors essential to preserve the integrity and health of her entire organic industrial body.

It is too notable a circumstance to suffer it to pass with a mere casual observation that, while the progress of other nations who believe in the virtue of forcing nature's hand is intermittent and marked with such cataclysms of industry and trade as to endanger their civic, political, and financial foundations, France ever pursues serenely the steady onward march of industrial

progress, disturbed only by sporadic and transient disturbances that may occasionally arise in the confusion and disorder of her great urban centres. To disclose the cause of this exceptional state of France, we need seek no further than the fact that, unlike some other nations, she has preserved the security of that great interest and industry that gives steady, healthful, and virtue-preserving employment directly to nearly two thirds of her people, with its indirect influence to nearly four-fifths of the whole population of the nation.

The wisdom of her statesmen, perhaps enlightened by a severe experience, has taught them that the stability of the state is securely assured so long as agriculture is preserved and maintained as the supreme industry and interest of the nation. Experience has taught them that, no matter what may be the periodic tempests of social and political passion that may sweep with their destructive and indiscriminate fury through her political centres, the contented, diligent, and uncorrupted tillers of the soil spread over the face of her fair land will soon securely replace the nation on her wonted pathway to a higher destiny, repairing the self-inflicted injuries, and infusing a purer life into the seething centres of corruption and sedition, and the whole nation will thus



emerge to a higher and better state through this elimination of an excessive ferment of urban vice.

A further recourse to statistics clearly shows, that not only were the salutary purposes of these preservative measures fully realized, but in their operation no injury or disturbance was visited upon other cardinal industries and interests of the nation. We find that the policy of this country of protecting her agriculture not only did not retard the growth of the urban element, but that, in fact, there was an actual increase in the proportion it bore to the whole population of the nation, during the thirty years from 1870 to 1900. Thus the proportion of the urban population to the whole, which was twenty-six per cent. in 1870, rose to thirty-five per cent. in 1900. This can be accounted for by the fact that, during this era, infected with that city-building mania prevalent throughout the world, no protective measure could wholly avert the effects of those powerful influences that in other nations produced such inordinate results.

In France, as in other countries, the cities no doubt received a stimulating impulse from that extraordinary increase in appropriations and expenditures which, in common with other nations, forms such a striking feature of all governments during the past half century. To such colossal

proportions have they at last grown that they are awakening the gravest solicitude among statesmen and economists. It may perhaps be deemed unnecessary to here point to the truth, so obvious does it seem to be, that these stupendous expenditures by governments operate distinctly, and more powerfully, to promote the growth of the urban than the rural element of a nation.

As France ever preserves the integrity, vitality, and vigor of her overshadowing industry, we need not marvel at the miracle wrought by her agriculturists, that out of their abundant reserve resources they made possible the speedy liquidation of a colossal war indemnity, and that from time to time she has been enabled to give aid also to other commercial nations, to appease their financial embarrassments; and this, while the agriculturists of Great Britain could indulge in no other hope or aim than to minimize their losses, discharge their tax obligations, and meet the burden of their poor-rates.

As further evidence of the prosperity of this class in France, it is well known that when a mere fragment of a hectare of land is offered for sale in that country, it awakens the keenest competition among the many who desire to possess it. Still further, as a more substantial and tangible measure

of this prosperity, it must be noted that the agricultural wealth of France, whose whole area is not greater than that of a single State in the United States, and with less than half the population of our country, exceeds by several billions of dollars our own aggregate agricultural wealth, with our vastly superior domain of cultivated and fertile lands. Yet more, it is the prosperous peasantry in France that hold the larger part of the colossal volume of government *rentes*.

A condition of agriculture in a nation such as brings honor as a pursuit with sure and ample rewards in its exercise, in an age when it is a general custom to favor and ennoble other occupations by governmental patronage and public sentiment, depressing husbandry into such a state of decline and disrepute that "Hodge" in England and "Hayseed" in America have become terms expressive of popular contempt, is a spectacle so extraordinary that it excites no less our curiosity than it awakens our desire to know through what special causes it was created, and by what general policy it was maintained.

In an effort to explain a paradox so striking, we feel sure that you will excuse a seeming needless recapitulation of what has previously been pointed out, touching the rise and growth of agriculture

in its varied phases. We have shown that the culture of the soil, or even the pastoral pursuit, in its inception can be carried on only under the protecting ægis of a military power, the centre of which is usually a fortified hill town. There thus, incidentally, grew out of this fundamental necessity that assemblage of scattered agricultural units wherein there developed those special forms of labor that secure the highest economic results to the whole community, embarrassed only by the existence of an indispensable military power and spirit. By the gradual, or perhaps forcible, extension of influence or power of some more favorably conditioned tribe or race over a body of greater or less extended groups of agriculture, under a more or less effective administrative unity, the special attending military element of each becomes merged under a centralized form also. The removal, therefore, of this inhering military necessity, with its cost and inconvenience, leaves each agricultural group, in its collective form, the free and full exercise of all its civic forces and functions under purely economic influences and conditions.

Out of such inchoative confederation there ultimately crystallizes the state, whose paternal, political, and military care, when justly admin-

istered, insures to the collective agricultural groups composing it the most perfect condition under which husbandry can exist. There are no authentic annals from which any accurate idea can be deduced as to the industrial institutions of the many primitive and warring Gallic tribes that in ancient times formed what now constitutes the domain of France and were its ancient progenitors. Unfortunately, along with all other races, they shared the common fate at the hands of the early historian, who disdained to portray the prosaic affairs and incidents of industrial life, and confined himself to the more congenial task of an epic recital of the many personal exploits, political and military contests and strifes, and the social doings of the chieftains and leaders of the nations.

That the early Gallic tribes and races were diffused throughout their territory in greater or less concentrated agricultural groups, similar to all races and tribes in their primitive state, is indirectly supported by vague historical data. It was no doubt due to the concentration of the military element of these individual agricultural centres that the united Gallic tribes so long resisted the invincible legions of Rome, under the matchless leadership of the great Cæsar. We are left, however, solely to conjecture whether the present

highly organized and developed system of French agriculture arose out of an ancestral legacy, or whether by a spontaneous generative process it grew out of the habits, customs, and special aptitudes that are innate in this people. Be that as it may, nowhere in the Western world do we find such skilful division and subdivision, or such thorough and effective grouping of the entire agricultural body and forces of a nation as is revealed in modern France.

By the aid of statistics, some idea of this system may be formed. We find that in 1900 there were in France over eighteen thousand communes and towns with a population not exceeding five hundred, representing a total of over five millions. Of those above five hundred and not exceeding one thousand inhabitants, there were ten thousand with an aggregate population of seven millions, and of those above one thousand and not exceeding two thousand inhabitants, there were over five thousand with an aggregate population of seven millions. Therefore, we find that her agricultural body is divided into over thirty-three thousand communes and towns, with a combined total of over twenty-two millions of people. There are, besides, over two thousand communes and towns whose population does not exceed four thousand, which

number over eight millions, and of which the rural element doubtless constitutes a large proportion, or may be largely in the ascendant.

In the official statistics, it is shown that the rural population in France was, in 1900, over twenty-three millions, and the urban population was sixteen millions. We believe we may properly assume that in towns of five thousand inhabitants and upward, the strictly urban element became the ascendent one, and in towns and communes under five thousand the rural element was the prevailing one.

We find, therefore, the towns and communes of five thousand inhabitants and upward numbered a little over five hundred, with a total population of eleven millions. Thus we see that in a total population of the nation of thirty-nine millions, in 1900, there are classed as rural twenty-four millions, and as urban fifteen millions of people. This gives five hundred and fifty cities with a population of five thousand and upwards, and a total of thirteen millions, in which the strictly urban element predominates; and thirty-five thousand three hundred towns and communes under five thousand inhabitants, with a total of twenty-eight millions of people, in which the strictly rural element is the greatest.

We have heretofore shown how, by reason of a closer and more intimate association peculiar to urban life, the political element of it crystallizes into such an available, compact, and homogeneous form as to enable it to be wielded at will, with an effect far transcending that of a like number of units existing in an agricultural body in a diffused form. We have also pointed out that, along with a vast increase in economic advantages, in virtue of a differentiation of the varied forces of agriculture in its collective form, there developed also a corresponding increase in political influence in national affairs. It was in this capacity of French agriculture to organize its entire political forces into a more united and available body that lay the power to repel all influences that might operate to disturb its just relation to, and a permanent harmony with, all the productive forces of the nation's industries, insuring a stability and a measure of prosperity not only to itself, but to the whole country, without precedent among the nations. In brief, it is this distinctive feature of it that secures a commensurate power in the legislative affairs of the nation, and which preserved the French farmers, in those trying days, from the disasters that fell upon the agriculture of other countries.



It may be well to specifically trace the practical manner in which this protection is effected, and yet so adjusted as to prove injurious to none of the many other industries and material interests of the nation. One special instance may serve to fully illustrate the assiduous care that this nation vigilantly exercises, not only to safeguard the rural element of the country against unjust encroachments upon it from whatever source, but to maintain an equal balance between all the productive forces throughout the whole sphere of her industrial life.

From that almost constant relation of internal productive and consumptive capacities, attained and preserved in this nation, she is under the perpetual necessity of importing the raw material, essential to the uses of her citizens, which she does not produce, and many food products also which are largely cultivated by her own farmers. This margin of excess on the one hand, or deficiency on the other, thus tends to effect in some degree the value of her own home products of a similar nature.

As an initial product, we will again take wheat to illustrate this compensatory action. It scarcely calls for mention, so obvious is the fact, that it is to the personal interests of the cities to pur-

chase their food supplies at the least possible cost, and *per contra*, reciprocally, it is as essential to the interests of the rural classes to receive the highest obtainable price. It is manifest that it is in the battle-field of prices between the conflicting forces of special necessities in a nation that the true relation of urban and rural rights and interests is determined and established. This, you will perceive, is always upon the assumption that the contending forces are of a natural, and not abnormal, character. Any undue advantage of the one over the other, even though temporary in nature, must unsettle the uniform stability of related interests so essential to conserve the healthy condition of the whole economic body, and through which alone can be reached the largest volume and highest beneficial results to the collective activities of the nation.

Thus if, by variant and physical climatic causes, the crops of France should fall materially below the average, there would be a tendency towards higher prices for the producer. But such increase in price would unfavorably affect the urban interests, which have become adjusted to the ruling influence of less average prices. On the other hand, should there, through adventitious causes, be produced an excess above the normal average

of the yield of crops, there would similarly be a tendency to a fall in prices below the average, which would in a like manner operate to the detriment of the rural, and to the advantage of the urban classes. By an elastic tariff system, the automatic operations of which are tempered to current exigencies, an increase or decrease in total supplies can be effected at will, and the uniform relation of all the industries of the nation so long prevailing is thus maintained.

How perfect in action and decisive in effect were these regulative measures is proved by the fact that, as we have seen, the extreme mean variation in the mean price of the important cereal wheat was, for sixty years, only six cents per bushel. It must be specially remembered that, during the last thirty years of this period, there was, as we have shown, such a phenomenal increase elsewhere in the products of the soil as never before had been experienced and that, in other countries, produced wide and disastrous fluctuations in values. The compact and well co-ordinated industrial forces of France, with their resisting powers, remind one of nothing so much as the small, well-ordered, and organized armies of Greece, that always withstood the shock of overwhelming, though irregular and unformulated

Asiatic hosts, that, as an historian says, "relied more upon *numbers* than courage, and more on courage than discipline."

It must be evident to you that these well-equilibrated economies of France, the final evolution of the free and uniform operation of natural causes and laws, could have been shattered by suddenly subjecting them to the force of abnormal internal or external influences. It is an interesting reflection, as to what would have been the ultimate result had she submitted her industrial system to the same distracting forces of a fierce and unnatural competition that Great Britain incautiously permitted to impinge upon her own. We believe that we correctly define it as an unnatural competition, since we have shown that the torrent of American agricultural products, of the last thirty years, was wholly due to the confluence of exceptional and transitory conditions, and the perversion of trade and natural laws.

Had France thus followed the example of her neighbor, we should no doubt have witnessed the same rapid transformation of her whole industrial system as occurred in the United Kingdom. There would doubtless have risen the same *commercial democracy* on the ruins of a long cherished agriculture. She no doubt would have had a wider

commerce and a greater commercial marine, larger and more numerous cities, embellished with an impossible architecture, and last, but not least, a numerous and indigent proletariat concentrated in the cities, that possessed no other asset than a franchise ever available to wealth. We would, perhaps, have witnessed also those same internecine struggles that are now raging in Great Britain, between the two dominant classes, in which, on the one hand, is revealed the effort to retain, and, on the other, to recover, the wealth wrongly diverted and distributed by various artificial methods and laws, and which seems destined to subvert every constitutional and traditional principle of the government.

In fact, is not this conflict the necessary outcome of a violation of that essential harmony of interests on which rest the permanence and stability of all organic forms, and upon which even the state itself depends? This must be so, if there lies any validity in the principle of a just coalition of all their active constituent members. Further, is it not precisely the effort to restore this unbalanced harmony by an equable redistribution of wealth that in essence constitutes the seditions, convulsions, and revolutions that unfortunately too often arise within nations, ending in their ultimate disruption?

## XII

### AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

LET us now consider, for a moment, some of the conspicuous effects visible in our own country directly traceable to the sudden and abnormal development of the latent agricultural resources of the Trans-Mississippi territory. — We must first note the general effect, as disclosed in the unequal ratio of increase in population and products, of the rural and urban sections of the nation respectively. We find that while, from 1870 to 1900, the population of the cities alone exceeding twenty-five thousand inhabitants increased over two and one half times, the whole population during this time increased only eighty-eight per cent. An even greater disparity is shown in the increased products of the two classes during this time, as we find that the growth of manufactured articles alone was over threefold, while that of the farms was less than half as much. The total value of the one, in fact, for the year 1900 being less than

five billions of dollars, and that of the other exceeding thirteen billions.

In our former analysis of the growth of agriculture, we have classed it in two distinct conditions, namely, that wherein the natural deterrent causes limited it to a slow, though constant and steady development; and the other where, through a conjunction of exceptional natural and artificial causes, there was temporarily an unlimited rapidity of development. Yet you must observe that the latter condition, in its very nature, could exist only in a limited degree both as to extent and time, and its abnormal effects could not, therefore, indefinitely be extended. However, in its brief existence, it could work such serious confusions and disorders among all the productive factors in the established industrial forces that had evolved out of the former or natural condition, that it may require years of united and unselfish effort to readjust and restore, if indeed the disorder has not already passed beyond human power to remedy or rectify.

Reduced to its simplest terms, this is just what constitutes the political and economic tumult now waging in Great Britain, and which we may only too soon see repeated in our own country. It is impossible for a state to preserve a real and

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general prosperity, or even a stability, of its political institutions, in which there is suffered to exist a wide and pronounced divergence in the wealth and power of the rural and urban classes, the distribution of which was the direct product of exceptional and transient natural conditions, united with artificial influences, methods, and discriminating laws. If, in Great Britain, the indirect transference of a large part of the wealth of agriculturists to unduly augment that of the urban classes has caused such national ferment, what may we not expect will be the result in a country such as our own, where a transference like in nature has taken place to a far greater extent, and in a more aggravated form?

In the development of agriculture throughout the whole region east of the Mississippi River, except in the prairie area of Illinois, we have seen that its progress was ever retarded from the earliest times by natural limitations and restraints. It was, therefore, of such nature as to render any period of abrupt expansion impossible, its advance being constant and uniform, and the volume of its products of necessity increased only by steady increments. It was upon the region east of the Mississippi River that the prolific outflow of cheap products fell most heavily with its withering effects.



What these effects were, due to this superfluity of products, it may be necessary to again briefly recapitulate.

Of the staple cereals there was produced in that territory alone, in thirty years from 1870 to the beginning of the present century, a period that marks the most rapid expansion of agricultural operations, an aggregate volume largely in excess of that prior to this time in the whole history of the country. Although increasing in a less marked ratio, the same must be said of cotton and other products. Recourse to statistics is again essential to realize clearly what were the disastrous results of this superabundant weight upon the entire agricultural interests east of the Mississippi River. In the distribution of a nation's varied industrial products, we have seen that no increase or diminution in the volume of *any one* can militate against any special, or the general, interest, so long as they are controlled and determined by salutary trade, and the untrammelled action of natural laws. This must be true, since all sound trade operations, in their final and complete forms, are based on a mutual exchange of products under conditions where the greatest correlative benefits are assured.

By nature's conserving tendencies, a just bal-

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ance will be speedily restored where the true order of supply and demand has been disturbed through an abnormal state of either. It is where perverted trade laws can be applied to exceptional natural conditions, that there develop the widest variant results in the cardinal industries of a people, such as create not only an antagonism between them, but also among the integral parts of the several industries themselves. We must again recur to what is perhaps the most signal illustration of this in the whole history of industry.

It must be well remembered that in our division of the whole country, we have done so both on a physical and a time basis. The one is concerned with that portion of the territory lying east of the Mississippi River, comprising a region where agriculture of necessity could grow only at a steady and strictly limited rate of progress. The other is a territory whose exceptional uniformity in quality and fertility of soil, together with other peculiar characteristics, made a rapid and almost unlimited rate of development temporarily possible.

The time limitations we have assumed cover, on the one hand, the period of thirty years, from 1840 to 1870, coincident with that in which the progress of agriculture yet remained measurably

under natural influences and restrictions. The other is coeval with the real beginning and full fruition of those combined causes that accelerated in such striking degree the products of agriculture, with its radical transformations throughout the whole field of our country's industry. To avoid a needless elaboration of detail, we will in our comparisons confine our data to the staple cereals which supply a fair index as to the many other and important products of the soil during these respective periods.

Official statistics show that, during the first thirty-year period, there were produced approximately four billion bushels of wheat, eighteen billions of Indian corn, and four and one half billions of oats. As there was during the whole period a steady export of a not inconsiderable surplus, it is apparent that the productive capacity of the region east of the Mississippi River, under natural conditions, was more than sufficient to meet the necessities of the entire country, as the excess of production of grain west of that river was, during that period, an inappreciable part of the whole. On the other hand, we find that in the second period, from 1870 to the beginning of the present century, there were produced of wheat twelve and one half billions of bushels, of Indian

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corn forty-four billions, and of oats seventeen billions. Furthermore, as directly bearing upon the all-important question of excessive supply, statistics show that of the aggregate product of the staple cereals, from 1840 to 1870, there was a per capita production of eight hundred and sixty bushels, measured by the total mean population of the country during that time. For the period from 1870 to 1900, there is revealed a per capita product of one thousand four hundred and fifty bushels, or nearly seventy per cent. greater than that of the earlier period, computed by a like scale of measurement. And yet the agricultural population relative to the total population of the nation was much greater during the first period than in the second.

We believe you will find a retrospective and hypothetical estimate, at this point, at least interesting, even if incapable of practical verification. Assuming that the lands west of the Mississippi River were possessed of the same fertility, and that they were subject to the same obstacles in the way of their reclamation as were encountered in the lands east of it, an instructive lesson at least may be drawn from the theoretical computation of the results that would have been attained in the agriculture of our country up to

that time. Applying the same per capita production that obtained in the first period, we find that the total volume of the three staple cereals, during the second period, would have been forty-seven billions of bushels, instead of nearly seventy-four billions that were actually produced during that time. In making this comparison, great as is the contrast shown, it would become still greater were it practicable to properly allocate in our reckoning that surplus product of Illinois directly due to the greater facility with which her prairie lands could be reclaimed. So completely were they redeemed in 1870, that we have chosen to include that State thereafter as properly within the group of older States, having at that time reached almost the full limit where any rapid ratio of increase was possible, as subsequent statistics show.

We have before stated that in the first, or what might properly be called the period of natural development, there was an agricultural output in excess of domestic wants, leaving a surplus to be consumed in foreign countries. It will therefore be readily realized what must have been the depressing influence of the excessive products of agriculture in the second, or forcing period. From this glut there was no relief, save only to such

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degree as foreign countries found it to their interests to absorb an otherwise almost useless surplus,—a relief both precarious and inadequate.

It might, in view of this absorption of so large and redundant an excess, be fairly held that it was in foreign markets that the price of the output, during these years, was determined for the agriculturist of the United States. This would imply that to be a natural and just one, an exchange of commodities by the agriculturist of our country required that it should be done on free and mutual terms with those countries in which was fixed the value of his own products. Unfortunately for him, that condition of exchange was not permitted to prevail, nor does it now exist.

As further emphasis of this great disparity of production, there is yet to be recorded the fact that during the latter, or period of excessive production, the agricultural classes grew relatively smaller in numbers, and those engaged in non-agricultural occupations grew in a marked increased ratio. In the comparative estimate we have given of the two periods, the same ratio equally applies to the many other products of the soil, which will largely add to the great difference revealed in the cereals, making a total disparity

truly colossal. Under this hypothesis, considering the disabilities imposed upon agriculture and the rapid, unequal advance in the non-agricultural element of the nation, it would seem a fair inference that the latter has anticipated by many decades its expectancy, and has availed itself of an undue part of the wealth that was contained in the latent resources of the lands, and which should have been ultimately shared equally by all.

It is a notable fact, and often referred to now with mingled regret and alarm, that the fertility of the soil was not maintained during this era of the country's startling outburst of rural products. Rather has it declined, a fact that is already causing serious concern as to its near effects upon our future supply. In truth, what motive was there to induce the overweighted farmer of the East and elsewhere to replenish the soil of his unremunerative farm, during this period of affluent production in the new regions of the West? It was a simpler problem for him to remove to that region, and occupy a new farm with its ripe and fertile resources, at a mere nominal cost, or as a free gift from the government, than to maintain at great labor and cost the fertility of the old one, with its burden of long accumulated fixed investments.

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Our hypothesis opens a wide field of speculative inquiry, in which there is no more important consideration than what would have been the present relation of the rural and urban elements of our country, had no abnormal disturbing influences supervened.

As to this, it must readily be admitted that the proportion of the urban would have been relatively less important than it is now. There would be fewer and smaller cities, less mileage of railways and other means of general intercommunication, and a more limited number of other industries peculiar to urban life. There would, however, not exist that surplus investment in buildings and over-ornate structures, or other creations which are the instruments of needless extravagance, solely to administer to a morbid desire for an indulgence in excessive luxury. Their wealth, moreover, being instead dependent, in origin and support, more upon creative and constructive influences, based upon lasting and fundamental necessities, would be of a more real and permanent nature than now, and therefore less of a speculative, artificial, and tentative character, and far more certain and constant in remunerative returns. In their trade operations there would be a lessened danger of those financial reversions and revulsions



that now all too frequently daze and distract the whole nation, with their sudden alternations of affluence and penury, the enrichment of one class being through the ruin of another. All the affairs of the cities being ethically more broadly based on just reciprocal rights, relations, and methods, a purer and more healthful economic and social atmosphere would pervade the whole, and fewer vices, born of inordinate and undue wealth and excessive luxury, would radiate their fatal miasm throughout the whole body politic.

On the other hand, being in the enjoyment of its full meed of reward, what was once a long subordinated and even despised agriculture would everywhere display evidences of highest prosperity, general thrift, and most thorough and complete development. Instead of a few arterial lines of intercommunication with their monopolistic grasp, there would everywhere be diffused a network of efficient and varied means of intimate intercourse, suiting the special wants and necessities peculiar to this industry, and all the numerous resources and aids pertaining to this art would be availed of in the fullest manner and most efficient form.

As bearing upon that higher excellence to which agriculture would thus have attained under this hypothesis, and especially in the develop-

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ment of a more complete, thorough, and varied system of internal intercourse, we must again cite the example of France. In that country, under the conditions of her agriculture, which are not unlike those which we have assumed would have existed in our own, she has created within the compass of her small territory (its whole extent being 40,000 square miles less than that of our own State of Texas) more than half a million of miles of the most perfect highways, and over twenty-five thousand miles of canal and canalized water-courses, whose services almost wholly contribute to the special requirements of her agriculture.

Although, under our assumption, the agricultural and rural element of our country would be fewer in number than now, occupying a smaller though far more highly cultivated area, having enjoyed the full and just rewards of their labor, their total wealth would be much greater than it is at present, and the *aggregate real wealth* of the nation would be little, if any, inferior to what is now displayed in its highly inflated and artificial form. Most important of all, what was once a discredited agricultural element would, in its higher development, sustain an equable and appropriate relation to all other industries, so

essential to a sound status of the whole, radiating throughout every atom and fibre of the country the purifying and conserving influence of a healthy and well ordered rural life. In addition, our nation would have still been possessed of a vast domain, whose untouched store of wealth—the common property of all—would remain to meet, for the generations to come, those steady demands of a uniform and truly progressive growth of national life.

You must perceive that the same ideal state we have depicted, under the conditions assumed, would have been as fully realized had there been a wiser and more judicious dole of our public lands—even with their ready resources—such as would have averted that violent and in many ways fatal shock to which our whole system of husbandry was subjected, producing as a resultant effect an unbalanced state of all the forces that constitute, as a whole, the economic body of our country. In fact, does not the very essence of the problem that now confronts our country lie in the necessity of a redistributing, or rather restoring to the rural element that fair share of the nation's wealth which, through exceptional conditions and unequal influence of laws, was unjustly wrested from them? That the inequality we have here

shown is of no illusory character, a few salient facts and statistics will confirm.

In considering the total amount of cereals produced in the United States during the last thirty-year period, we find that approximately forty-five per cent. of the whole was produced in those States comprising the territory east of the Mississippi River. From the weight that oppressed the market, through the excessive products of prairie and plain lands west of that river, a rapid and radical decline in their value ensued, which speedily carried them much below the mean price that had prevailed in the previous thirty-year period. This would show a total decline in value of the wheat raised in the eastern section of our country of nearly one and a half billions of dollars. For Indian corn and oats combined, the decline was in excess of six billions of dollars, making for this group of cereals, alone, the colossal decline of approximately eight billions of dollars from what would have been on a like aggregate production and prices of these cereals from 1840 to 1870, or before that period in which the redundant outflow from the Trans-Mississippi River region had produced any marked influence on prices.

As this fatal decline in value of their products fell most heavily upon the agriculturists in the

more eastern section of the country, where the accumulation of their fixed investments was greatest, and which decline in values was more directly reflected in the rapid growth of urban values, it is small wonder that for every skyscraper rising in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, there were to be seen hundreds of abandoned and fatally depreciated farms in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Even the region itself that was the fateful cause of this decline was a serious sufferer from its own superabundant products. Being farther removed than the more eastern section of the country from the great consumptive centres, not only was the price of their products relatively smaller, but, on the other hand, that of the supplies they were compelled to purchase was correspondingly greater. This rendered a net gain, directly through operations strictly of an agricultural nature, even more impossible in the extreme western than in the eastern sections of the country.

The only saving grace to the agriculturist of the former region lay in the minimum of cost at which he acquired his lands, and from which there was sure to be an advance in price along with the increase in population and general development of the nation. Yet for many

years this, with few exceptions, represented an apparent and only nominal gain; for there remained a very large fixed charge against these lands that the farmer was forced to place upon them in order to redress the losses in the direct process of farming, consequent upon the low prices that his own excessive production created. The advance in the price of lands in this region was followed, as a necessary consequence, from the same causes, by a proportionate decline in those east of the Mississippi River—a much larger territory than that in the West—thus entailing upon the fixed landed investment of the country, taken as a whole, such a decline as to leave but a small relative gain in the entire agricultural values of the nation during that time. Even through the recovery in prices in the past few years, this net loss in the total fixed investment of agriculture has been only measurably restored, or at least there has been only a relatively small advance.

This fall in the values of agriculture in the East, following in the nature of things the rise in those of the West, can, in its most elementary sense, be considered simply as a transference of a portion of the acquired, and to be acquired, rural wealth of the East to the sections of the West receiving special governmental favors, subjoined to its

rare natural advantages. This is what is only too frequently the case in other industries, with the result that an apparent gain in total wealth is largely illusory; since there is a countervailing loss in one industry equal to the gain in another, due to some unequal advantage tentatively acquired by one over the other. Indeed, in the industrial affairs of the nation, considered as a whole, this is conspicuously illustrated, since in the various advantages, acquired and enjoyed too often by unfair means and methods, by the non-agricultural or urban over the rural or agricultural classes of our country, in the total advance in the nation's wealth during the last thirty-year period, the extraordinary gains of the former are subject to an offset in a loss by the latter, almost equally extraordinary, during that time.

### XIII

#### TARIFFS

**I**T is of the order of nature's operations in their totality that, in the long run, their effects and ultimate results must be in the strictest harmony. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to expect that in her efforts to restore (and thus secure the stability of the whole) a harmony so violated, she will do so by the compensatory action of her laws, giving to the agriculturist in turn such advantage as will secure the redistribution that will again restore the equilibrium temporarily unsettled by the artificial and unnatural advantages wielded by the urban classes to their unequal benefit? In considering the probability of such equalizing action, it is well to remember that history teaches us that, in the affairs of nations, nature in her ultimate purposes and inscrutable economy more often permits the ruin of a people as a result of their own discordant acts, than their preservation by re-established harmony.



This is, in its simplest terms, the problem that faces us in our own country. We have seen that, in the territory east of the Mississippi River, there was a decline in the value of cereal products of nearly eight billions of dollars in the last thirty-year period, as compared with the mean price of the three staples in the former thirty-year period. For reasons to be hereafter noted, the products of the urban classes of the nation being preserved against a similar decline, this reduced value of agriculture in the East must be viewed somewhat in the nature of an indirect and involuntary tribute by it to the wealth of the urban or non-agricultural classes of the nation, and more especially to those of the Eastern portion of it.

But as there was produced during this period an equal amount of cereals in the Trans-Mississippi region that suffered a similar decline, the aggregate loss of the whole country was thus proportionately increased, and the urban gains equally enhanced. Add to these extraordinary figures a further large total due to the reduced value of other products of the soil, arising from the same cause, and we shall have a colossal aggregate decline, largely to be credited to the gains of the urban classes of the whole country; which may go far towards clarifying, if not solving, a situation

so paradoxical, wherein one great industrial class, comprising over one half of the total population of the nation, possesses so small a share of its total wealth. This is all the more perplexing when we consider that through the operation of all the industrial forces and factors of the nation up to 1850, there resulted an acquisition of wealth on the part of agriculture in our country of more than one half of the whole, which ratio was maintained until the artificial or manipulating era began.

It remains to trace the origin, and record the specific effects, of those special agencies that gave such an overwhelming advantage to one cardinal industrial section of the nation over the other. Had the great nations of continental Europe followed the example of Great Britain and admitted with the same freedom our over-weighted surplus of agricultural products, it is true it would have fallen with diminished force upon the whole; since its effects, instead of being centred mainly upon one nation, would have been equally distributed among all.

It is also true that this would have lessened the evil effects upon our own agriculture by greatly extending the sphere of demand. It is nevertheless certain, also, that it would in a more or less

marked degree have unsettled—as it did in Great Britain—the well balanced internal relations of industry existing in them all. In considering the development of a body of industrial energies in a nation, through a free and full play of natural causes, concurrent with the influence of just laws wisely directed, we have seen that no internal inharmony can arise through an undue excess of any of its constituent factors that, in their collective form, constitute an organic whole.

Similarly, there could arise no external disorder, for the same reason, between nations in their commercial relations with one another. This must logically follow, for under these conditions, all trade transactions being in their essence a reciprocal exchange of products, on the basis of greatest mutual benefits, a normal supply must ever be fixed and determined by a normal demand. Influenced by the necessities springing from the extraordinary expansion of agriculture we have noted in the Trans-Mississippi region during the decades from 1870 to 1900, there arose in the urban and non-agricultural classes a correlative necessity to supply appropriate commodities, to meet the sudden increased wants of agriculture consequent upon the rapid increase of that industry. From a mutual exchange of products under the rigid

limitations fixed by the principle we have pointed out governing just and equable trade transactions, there would have developed in the urban or non-agricultural element of the nation an increased supply of their products in equal ratio with that of agriculture to meet home demands. But we have seen that, from the combined influences of many special favoring advantages in the Trans-Mississippi region, those lands developed with such rapidity that their products were soon greatly in excess of those which hitherto prevailed under less favorable conditions of expansion, so that they became far in excess of the nation's internal capacity to consume.

We find, therefore, that during this period the agriculturists of our country were soon forced to seek, in foreign countries, a market for a very large proportion of their entire products. You will perceive that, even under the principle of coequal exchange that we have indicated, the urban or non-agricultural element of the nation would have enjoyed an increased and prosperous growth along with that of the agriculture of the country, since this excessive growth of the latter would have produced a corresponding increase in its demand for the products of the former. Under the conditions assumed, there could result no injury to

the agriculturist from the low prices of his products caused by this accelerated production, in so far as the exchange in home markets was concerned, even though such exchange was not sufficient to satisfy his full wants; for the low price of his own products would be fully reflected in an equally reduced price for the urban or non-agricultural commodities at which *they* would thus be enabled to offer them in return. Being, in fact, on a mutual basis of production and exchange, it would be inevitable that both must rise or fall in a correlative ratio.

In so far as concerns the exchange of his surplus with other nations, the same would hold true; for, to the extent of a price less than the similar products of these nations, our own agriculturist would have been benefited by a like lessened cost of the products which they would have been able to exchange in return. Thus at home and abroad the agriculturist of our own country, realizing in a great measure countervailing compensations for the reduced price of his own product, would have been largely relieved from the injurious influences arising from his own plethoric production. The serious effects of the sudden and drastic competition that the farmers of the Eastern portion of our country had to encounter from the West,

with its resultant decline in the value of their fixed investments, would remain the one conspicuous and permanent injury inflicted upon the nation's industries by the rapid development of the rich Trans-Mississippi region, during the thirty-year period we have been considering.

Yet, even the farmers of the East, under the conditions we have assumed, would have been in some measure recouped for the decline they sustained in the value of their lands, by the reduced cost at which they would have been able to purchase their supplies, as a direct result of the lower price which the lessened value of their own products enabled the urban element to produce those peculiar to their own special industries.

In reflecting upon the ethics of trade, it must be admitted, under the circumstances presumed, that to the extent of our own agricultural exports, we would have been benefited by creating, in some degree, an injurious disturbance in the established relation that agriculture bore to the other industries, in the nations that admitted our own agricultural supplies at a reduced price from their own. As it is ever in the power of these nations to minimize these injuries or prevent them altogether, there therefore cannot rest upon others a moral obligation to seriously regard the con-

sequences that may follow their own voluntary acts.

We are aware that a risk is incurred of a trespass on your time and patience by what may seem a needless iteration; but we are moved to give, in a more specific and compact form, the scattered evidences heretofore presented of the fact that there has long existed, and now exists, such a remarkable disparity in the wealth of the whole nation, held respectively by the rural and urban elements of it, as cannot be accounted for by any principle of just or natural distribution.

We here enter into the sinister presence of what, in the easy perversion of a sound economic principle, can become the most formidable instrument ever wielded by cunning and avarice not only to arrest the legitimate onflow of the laws of nature and trade, but to divert them from their proper courses in order to promote the cause of special interests and to further the selfish aggrandizement of class. We, of course, refer to high-protective and prohibitive tariff laws.

In the ideal industrial state of mankind, in which all the forces of production and exchange are directed and controlled solely by natural conditions and just laws, no general protective measures can be made to effectively serve the

cause of special interests or class, as in the harmony of their action equal results only will follow. In fact, where natural laws and conditions are permitted to prevail, no protective measures can ever become a necessity to the material development of a nation. In the wide extent and complex forms, however, that modern industrial affairs and methods assume, there may suddenly arise new and unforeseen circumstances and conditions, of a tentative nature, against whose disturbing and injurious effects protective measures may be wisely and efficiently interposed by nations, to conserve the order and maintain the integrity of their established industrial, commercial, and other institutions.

The true protective principle lies, not in a creative, but in a conserving, quality; hence in the warfare of trade it cannot, so to speak, serve as a leader, but solely as an arbiter between its contending forces. Its real function, therefore, in the realm of trade and industry consists, not in the creation of an increased prosperity in any part, which would not be in harmony with the just order of the whole, but in preserving and perpetuating what is in strict accord and consonant with a wise economy of all. Revulsions would thus never generate through economic causes, and drastic readjust-



ments in the industrial world would never become a necessity of nature, as must happen in the case of all organic bodies wherein an internal derangement in the true order of their members has been suffered to develop. It is in our own country that the evil effects are most signally manifest, and the malign influence most widely felt, of an abuse of a protective principle which, if wisely applied and held within judicious limitations, may serve to promote the several, as well as the general, interests and welfare of a nation.

It is in the immediate, discriminating, and oppressive application of this principle that we discover the true agency and cause which created and maintained a status in our economic and industrial system so anomalous that, while the value of the products in one of the most important sections of our national productive industry suffered a marked and steady decrease, those of another class were effectually preserved against influences tending to cause a like decline. This is all the more noteworthy, since it was upon the great industry suffering this decline in value of its products that the other most largely depended for its existence and support. This duality of interests, thus created in the two cardinal industries of the nation, becomes the more glaring when we

consider that, while certain special laws caused inevitably a lessened value of the products of one industry, to the distinct and direct advantage of another group of industries, other laws at the same time, through their partial and favoring effects, maintained for this favored class, at an abnormal maximum, the price of their products, by unjustly limiting the other in their proper and legitimate spheres of mutual exchange. While the one class—the urban or non-agricultural—thus favored, reaped the harvest of a double advantage, the other was conversely subjected to a double depletion in the fruits of its production.

It is needless to seek further for an adequate cause or causes to account for the wide disproportion in the wealth held by each class respectively in the total of the nation. Although, as has been shown, the strictly agricultural element of our country constituted over one half of its population, and was also the direct and indirect cause of three fourths of the nation's industrial activities, yet the wealth of this class (figuring in such a superior manner in the affairs of the nation) was but a mere fraction, at the beginning of this century, of that amassed by the much smaller urban classes of the country. As it is impossible to impute this wide divergence to a like difference

in the moral qualities and industrial and intellectual capacities possessed by the urban over the rural class, we are forced to seek a solution of a situation so singular in an unequal advantage that the one class enjoyed over the other under the laws, and which was acquired through the ascendant political power that inheres in the very nature of an urban people.

To state the matter succinctly, this advantage was such that it enabled the urban or non-agricultural element of the nation, at *one and the same time*, to create a minimum price for the agricultural supplies they were under the necessity of purchasing, and also to fix a maximum price for their own products, which they in turn sold to the agriculturist and to other classes of producers. We are fully aware that the body of facts here presented discovers an anomaly so singular as to specially call for a solution, in view of the fact that the laws, so evidently discriminating in their nature, were enacted in a nation where the agricultural electorate was the most numerous one, and was the direct sufferer by them.

The inquiry is therefore a most pertinent one: Why did not the agriculturists guard their own interests against the influence of laws so manifestly to their injury, seeing that their political power

might have been easily the transcendent one in the nation? As a partial answer to an inquiry so material, we can only again point out the greater political harmony and vitality possessed by the urban over the rural electorate of our country, in virtue of the difference in the cohering and organizing power that inheres in the two classes.

There is, however, a more potent reason to be found in the fact, that these discriminating measures were formulated during the distractions and confusions just previous to, and during, our Civil War, which fixed the public mind almost exclusively upon the presence of dangers that were of the most threatening and alarming character. It was to a social institution in the South, growing out of peculiar and special agricultural necessities, that our Civil War can be largely attributed, and from which flowed so many unforeseen and disastrous consequences, as it is peculiarly the nature of civil conflicts to awaken resentments, quicken animosity, and suspend the judgment of the people. Of those discriminating measures enacted under these conditions, the salient ones were the high protective tariff, and that based on the land-grant policy of the government.

The former, *only*, stood in an essential relation to our unfortunate conflict, as its sole and original

object was to meet the transient necessities of the war, through increased resources of revenue. For the other, some palliation may be found for the serious disturbance that it subsequently wrought in the business affairs of the whole country, and in other nations as well, in the fact that at that time the bounteous resources contained in the soil of the Trans-Mississippi territory were generally but little realized, not even by those who afterwards gained such extraordinary advantages from it. As evidence of this fact, it will be recalled that so little was the vast latent wealth of this region suspected, that until comparatively recent years what is now the most fruitful region was recorded as the *Great American Desert* in the maps and charts of our country. It must in fairness be recognized that the full effects which followed were not anticipated, or clearly discerned, either by those who were to be so greatly benefited by this law or by those who were to so seriously suffer from it. It was, however, this potential resource which alone made possible, and gave full force and effect to, that twin enactment, the high protective tariff laws.

It must be obvious to you that, had the moderate ratio of agricultural expansion continued that hitherto uniformly marked the growth of that

industry prior to 1860, the urban classes would have realized only in an imperfect manner the great advantages the law secured them, since they would not have enjoyed the advantage of the low cost in their own production, which they derived from the lessened value of agricultural products growing out of the excess of that affluent region; as there is no good reason to believe that the price of these products would not have remained at the same level that prevailed in the ante-war period. To secure these advantages for the non-agricultural classes of Great Britain was the ruling motive that led to the abolition of her corn-laws.

In further seeking a solution of what seems to involve an anomaly, it must be remembered that over one half of the rural population of our nation had, for a time, no effective representation in our national legislature, as the Civil War eliminated that section where agriculture was, more than in any other part of the nation, the one sole pursuit of the people. How exclusively was agriculture the pursuit of the South is evidenced by the fact, that it was frequently claimed by the North, previous to the war, that there existed few industries of an urban character in that region, and this, with the deficiency in the usual proportion of urban population, was held as proof that it

was wanting in industrial skill and energy and the spirit of true progress. How unjust were these oft-repeated charges is shown by the enormous value of their products, constituting, at that time, four fifths of the exports of the nation, which alone maintained the needful balance of trade—and which also gave life to, and maintained the existence of, several, and especially one, of its most important urban industries.

Add to this, the preoccupation of the rural mind of the North by the stirring and embittering events and engrossing questions that led up to that war, it is easy to discover how in our national legislation there might be enacted measures, the very spirit of which unduly favored the smaller, and was inimical to the true interests of that larger class whose superior numbers, under different circumstances, would have properly given them an ascendant political influence in a government where representative principles prevailed. It was thus that the urban power of the country became the ruling one, directing and controlling at will the fiscal and other policies of the nation,—a *sovereign power* that they have continued to maintain with steadily augmenting strength, even to this day.

Here must be noted the important fact that,

prior to our unfortunate civil conflict, the agrarian element, under the leadership of a consolidated and pure ruralism of the South, was recognized as a political entity in our national legislative body, securing an equable recognition of its rights in the general economic affairs of the nation, and restraining aggressive urban tendencies.

May we not find a deep significance in what seems more than a fortuitous conjunction in the fact, that the agitation of the urban element of Great Britain against the rural began at a time almost coincident with that in our own country, the one happily ending peacefully in the abolition of the corn-laws and in the adoption of free trade, the other, unfortunately, in a civil conflict and a high protective tariff system? What may seem on first reflection a paradox in trade, is that under the influence of fiscal policies so widely different in the two nations, the results that followed were *direct and identical*; namely, the rapid and marked development of the urban power and interest over the rural in each nation, ending, in both, by the complete dominance of the one over the other. What constitutes a further coincidence is, that both nations seem now to be entering at the same time upon renewed intestine political contests, the very principle and purpose



of which are to again restore, in each country, the just equilibrium and harmony of the rural and urban rights that had hitherto long existed, and which were disturbed in both nations, although through widely different fiscal policies.

That like results should follow from causes so different in character, can be no surprise to one familiar with the intricacies of trade and commerce, or with the examples supplied in the material world by the inscrutable operations of natural laws. That results so similar from causes unlike in two nations may be naturally produced, need awaken no wonder when we consider that an equal dissimilarity existed in the inherent industrial and trade necessities of Great Britain and our own nation. Those of our nation grew out of the fact that the agricultural must ever be the superior industry; while, in the very nature of things, it must be the smaller industry in Great Britain.

The status of the industrial and economic affairs that existed in the United States before the Civil War was, in very truth, such as is found in all nations that have not been swept from the moorings of a safe conservatism by an aggressive commercialism, whose impatient spirit ever presses them on to an imprudent advance and progress. It is history's invariable record that this commercial

spirit, having its root in the cities, draws its sustenance largely from the body of the nation—absorbing first the fruits of agriculture. This record shows that concentrated wealth, so exorbitant and tainted by injustice, ends in radiating its evil influence throughout the national fibre, debasing the morals, corrupting the mind, and emasculating even the military strength of the nation, so that it no longer possesses that last resource to repel invasions or suppress sedition, which have their inspiration in a like motive or are perhaps animated by a spirit of revenge. This is but crystallizing, in a terse form, the chief causes of the rise and fall of Rome, whose fatal vices were an inordinate avarice and a lust of power and glory, and whose example may well be a lesson to nations.

It may be here noted that there first arises in a nation's agriculture an aristocracy of wealth, to be followed, only too often and surely, by a far more dangerous plutocracy, centred in the cities, springing from an insatiate spirit of commercialism.

Anticipating somewhat the observations we desire to make touching the future of China, it would seem that this great country stands in no serious danger from an aggressive urbanism, since,

under a constitutional régime (that inevitably awaits this people), the agricultural representation will always be so vastly the transcendent one as to insure its perpetual safety against legislative encroachments. Nor is there visible in her vast agrarian body any part which, by governmental favoritism through an unwise diversion of public utilities, can be fostered to the detriment or serious disturbance of it, with a corresponding advantage to the nation's non-agricultural industries, which favoritism constitutes the sole economic agency whereby the laws of a nation can cause the urban part of it to attain an overwhelming supremacy.

In our own country, what a strange political paradox is presented! We see that with a more numerous electorate at its command, the agrarian portion is yet without recognition as a distinct representative body in the legislative chambers of the nation; while an urban electorate, inferior in numbers, but with unity of purpose and harmony of interest and action, *dominates* the various policies of our government. Such is not the case in those countries that have judiciously preserved a balance of these two great industrial and productive bodies of the nation in that just relation with the respective importance and influence they sustain to their whole economic

affairs, and which has produced such prosperity as to become not only an object of envy, but even of fear, to other nations who unwisely permitted this indispensable harmony to be seriously disturbed, and in cases to be wholly destroyed.

The present unrest of the agricultural middle West is not without significance, as it may be a portent of a coming restoration of that legislative power once exercised in national affairs—long supplanted or suspended—the due right of that great body of the nation.

Although possessed of little practical, it may not be wholly devoid of theoretic, value to again consider what would have been the condition of our agriculture and other industries, had not the Civil War intervened, indirectly causing that interruption in the harmonious and well co-ordinated advance of all productive interests that so long existed previous to it.

May we not with some reason claim that, from a speculative retrospect of a completed cycle of human experience, there may be drawn many a valuable lesson, such as would serve as a useful guide and a rule of conduct in future actualities of life? It is most probable that, under the premises assumed, there would have been permitted no sudden increase of agricultural products,

such as would have materially lessened their value; for the Trans-Mississippi domain, with its richly laden and ready resources, would have been so disposed of, and at such value, that the capital invested by the purchaser would not have given him such an advantage as to enable him to produce at a much less cost than that of the older communities, with their greater accumulated fixed investments. This would certainly have followed; since (as it is wont in all financial affairs), being the dominant political power, they would have arrested the adoption of any measures that would create an unnatural and unjust competition, such as would seriously affect their own vested rights and interests. At the same time, the force of a wholesome public opinion and sentiment, expressed in proper legislation, would have insured such an increase in the area of tilled lands as would have been an effective check to an oppressive rise in prices growing out of a natural increase of population, and thus safeguard the general interest against an undue advantage that the older agricultural communities might derive from such an increased demand.

Left, therefore, to an untrammelled distribution, the rewards of all would have been determined by the free operation of natural laws only, establish-

ing such harmony and accord among them as would have placed the whole beyond the danger of selfish assaults of any special aggrandizing class or interest. There is little reason to doubt that this great industry (the prime origin and mainstay of the nation's wealth) would have still held a rank and influence in its legislative affairs commensurate with the important part it plays in the general economy of its life. The land west of the Mississippi River, so rich in latent resources and so readily available, would have been subject only to that rate of reclamation consistent with the well-balanced industrial relations of the whole country; and instead of so great an asset of the nation becoming utilized indirectly almost wholly to the sole and special advantage of one class, it would have been equally distributed to the common benefit of all. There would, therefore, have been no overweight of excess in products, with a minimum of prices, to fatally depress the older sections of agriculture—a pressure which is yet sensibly felt by them.

A uniform and natural division of labor's fruitful increase would have spread throughout the whole area of agriculture, bringing such abundance of free resources to this industry as would have resulted in its development and embellishment,

equalled only by that so agreeably displayed in France and other countries where its rights have been conserved by judicious protective laws. Being confined to a smaller area, skill and thoroughness would reign where now only haste, superficiality, and insufficiency prevail; and not only would the public domain, with its nascent riches of the soil, be availed of to that fulness consistent with a prudent hoarding of them, but the widespread and diversified natural means of intercommunication would have everywhere been thoroughly reduced to the services of man.

Curiously enough—so closely are the affairs of different nations linked together in these modern times—the effects of Great Britain's corn-laws, thus reduced to an almost harmless minimum, would not have caused those fierce contentions which now reign in that nation, as there would not have been poured upon her fated agriculture that excessive flood from our own country, not only blighting the prices, but extinguishing the hopes of the British husbandmen. Nor would there have resulted, as a direct consequence of this fatal depression in that capital industry, those dislocations of trade and those discords now more than ever manifest in every sphere of her political and civil life.

To one who is given to abstract reflections upon these subjects, it must seem improbable that nature will further permit so flagrant a violation of her first laws, *conformity* and *harmony*.

Even now there can be traced, in the recent advance in the price of agricultural products, distinct evidences that, as revealed in final results, there is an inviolable conserving power in nature's laws which, though temporarily subverted by man to his seeming advantage, brings in the end only injury to him. It is to the operation of her immutable laws that we can attribute, as an ultimate result, the advance in late years of values in the soil's products, and by which she may wrest from the legislator the power to force an abnormal price minimum to the direct advantage of one, and to as direct a detriment to another, industrial class. Through an awakened public conscience and emancipated judgment, she seems ere long destined also, in a like manner, to divest him of the power to further violate her laws by forcing an artificial maximum price, to similarly benefit one and injure another class. In other words, in the totality of her operations, it is the purpose of nature to preserve their harmony by abrogating an abnormal economic condition created by the laws of man, with their equally discordant



results, and to redistribute, on just lines, the rewards of labor that have long been subjected to an unequal division by unnatural methods and influences.

History supplies many examples of the serious and often fatal disturbances that arise in the affairs of nations by their attempt to return from a highly artificial state to one more in harmony with that of nature.

How often does man himself, in his physical being, illustrate the difficulties attending a similar attempt. Will our nation be equal to the great task that nature may—nay, is certain to—impose upon it, in the thorough and radical transformations she may demand?

## XIV

### UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AND URBAN INTERESTS

AS the greater facility of prairie and plain lands for rapid development over those covered by forests and other usual impedimenta to their reclamation is the important factor in the phenomena presented by the growth of this great industry in our country during the last half of the previous century, we will give, in a somewhat detailed form, statistical evidences of this superior capacity for speedy development.

From the settlement of our country down to 1850, approximately, in the advance of agriculture westward, the conditions, as we have noted, that retarded the conversion of lands from a state of nature to the uses of man were uniform, and of such a nature as precluded any materially rapid increase in the ratio of steady growth and development that had continually prevailed hitherto.

We accordingly find that, up to the year 1850,

the total area of lands that had been put under cultivation east of the Mississippi River was one hundred and twelve millions of acres, the progress of this industry having as yet made little advance beyond the limits of that river. Nor had there, as yet, been any marked development of the prairie lands of Illinois, as that State had then only five millions of acres of cultivated lands, the largest part of which was in the river valleys and along her watercourses. It was at, or near, this time that there set in that surprising development of the prairie lands of that State, which afterwards, in the more extensive plains and prairies west of the Mississippi River, was destined to play such an important, and in many ways serious, part in the history of husbandry in our country.

At this time, through an Eastern pressure and the sudden creation of mechanical aids to agriculture, the prairie lands of Illinois were put into a state of tillage at a rate hitherto unparalleled in the whole history of the culture of the soil. Thus we find that Illinois, with a total area of fifty-six thousand square miles, had under cultivation only five millions of acres in 1850, while in 1860 this State had thirteen millions of acres under cultivation, or an increase of eight millions in that decade. It is significant to here note that, in the neighbor-

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ing and representative States of Ohio and Indiana, with a combined area of seventy-seven thousand square miles, the increased area of their tilled lands was five million seven hundred thousand acres, or only seventy per cent. of the increased acreage shown by Illinois alone. Furthermore, the great neighboring states of Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin, with a combined area of two and one half times that of Illinois, increased their total area of cultivated land only twenty-two per cent. more than that State was enabled to expand her cultivated area during this time, and that too with less than one third of their combined population.

Further, we find that, during the two decades from 1850 to 1870, Illinois increased her cultivated lands by fourteen millions of acres, while the great States of Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan enlarged their combined area of tilled lands only twelve millions of acres, or two millions of acres less than that gained by Illinois during these two decades, with less than one half the population and area of lands.

We find that in 1850, the area of cultivated lands east of the Mississippi River was one hundred and twelve millions of acres, and that the total increase of cultivated lands east of that

river from 1850 to 1870 was forty and one half millions of acres. As the increase of tilled lands in Illinois during this time was fourteen millions of acres, it will be seen that of the total increase of cultivated lands in the United States east of the Mississippi River, from 1850 to 1870, that of the State of Illinois constituted over one third of the whole. And yet the area of that State is only one fifteenth and the population then was only one twentieth part of the total of the twenty-six states east of the Mississippi River.

To realize in its full potency this superior facility for reclamation from a state of nature possessed by prairie or plain lands over those with the usual diversification of timber and valleys, and other impedimenta, it is only necessary to point out the fact that the lands of Illinois alone that were reclaimed in the two decades from 1850 to 1870 were nearly one half of the area of lands cultivated in the United Kingdom, and almost one quarter of those under cultivation in France in 1870.

The causes of this wide disparity in the increase of cultivated land in the one condition contrasted with that of the other are unmistakable. Passing to a consideration of this question as evidenced in a wider field, we find that in the group of States embracing the prairie and plain areas west of the

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Mississippi River, there were under cultivation twenty-six million five hundred thousand acres in 1860; and in 1900, one hundred and ninety-four millions of acres, making a total gain in that region of one hundred and sixty-eight millions of acres in that time. As the aggregate gain for the whole country in the cultivated lands from 1860 to 1900 was two hundred and fifty millions of acres, it will be seen that two thirds of the whole is to be credited to a region that in 1860 was practically unsettled and relatively of insignificant production.

If figures so notable need further emphasis, it can be found in the fact that from a region practically undeveloped there grew up, in the forty years from 1860 to 1900, a highly cultivated area containing more tilled acres than had been developed in the whole nation prior to 1860, and with a greater total area of all lands. A glance at the wondrous capacity and productiveness of this region may further serve to elucidate a problem that may become more than a passing perplexity, before our country has reached a final solution of it. This can be best indicated by taking the thirty-year period from 1870 to 1900, as it was in 1870 that all the factors making for a rapid development which this region was capable

of finally united in their most effective action.

Thus of Indian corn, the production in this region west of the Mississippi River advanced from one hundred and ninety-four millions of bushels to over fourteen hundred millions, or more than half the aggregate product of this cereal in the entire nation during that period. Similarly of wheat, the production of this cereal increased from seventy-four millions of bushels to three hundred and fifty millions of bushels, or a like proportion to the total production of the whole country. Of oats, there was an increase from fifty-five millions of bushels to five hundred and twenty millions. Thus of these three staple cereals, an aggregate production in this region of only seven per cent. of the entire product in 1870 advanced to more than half the whole within thirty years, and was largely in excess of the average total of the whole nation from 1850 to 1860. As, during the latter decade, the production of cereals was more than sufficient to meet domestic necessities, leaving a very large surplus for exportation, it is evident that a greater portion of this extraordinary output in the Trans-Mississippi region can properly be regarded as a redundant excess.

From its volume, some feeble idea may be formed of the oppressive weight with which it bore

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upon not only home, but foreign, markets. This became reflected, in an unwelcome manner, to the agriculturists of our own country, in the inevitable and serious depression of prices that followed. What the full effects were upon agricultural values consequent upon the lowering of prices due to the plethora of product in the region under consideration, a few facts drawn from the United States census will sufficiently reveal. To more distinctly display these effects, we will refer to the decade from 1850 to 1860 as one that may be properly taken to represent the progressive growth of agriculture under what might be defined as natural conditions and limitations.

As respects the increase in agricultural wealth during this decade, we find that the value of farm property, including land with improvements, implements, machinery, live stock, and so forth, which in 1850 was about four billions of dollars, had increased to nearly eight billions in 1860, or a net gain of four billions of dollars in that decade. During the three decades from 1870 to 1900, the singular fact is disclosed that the decennial increase was almost exactly the same amount, or rather an average under four billions of dollars, for each decade respectively. This is all the more notable, since during that period the population



of the nation and the area of cultivated lands had more than doubled.

It is worthy of special mention, also, as an indication of the shadow cast over the whole of our agricultural economy by the depression of values caused by the burdensome excess of products during these years, that the acreage value of lands advanced only ten dollars and eighty cents during the half-century from 1850 to 1900. This small advance is rendered specially significant by the fact that six dollars and ten cents of this advance occurred during the decade of 1850 to 1860, leaving forty years during which the value was increased only four dollars and seventy cents per acre. From these facts many valid and instructive inferences are obviously warranted.

Since the decennial gain in agricultural wealth from 1860 to 1900 was equal only to that of the decade from 1850 to 1860, it logically follows that the total wealth of the agricultural classes would have been quite the same as, in fact even greater than, it was at the beginning of the present century, if neither the rapid extension of cultivated lands nor the increase of their population had occurred. But as there seems no good reason to suppose that the same steady rate of expansion of cultivated lands as before 1860 would not have continued, even though

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the domain west of the Mississippi River as a body had not possessed that facility for rapid development arising out of its special characteristics, it seems conclusive that the present wealth of the agricultural classes would have been much greater than it now actually is.

Moreover, there stands the conspicuous fact that the increase of the first period was under natural conditions of growth, uninfluenced by those ordinances of man not in harmony with the order of nature; while that of the second period was under the forcing or *fiat process*, or rather that policy of hastening or even *hurting* nature's operations—an economic heresy that arose about the beginning of our Civil War, and which has become a fixed idea and has since steadily gained in force.

When we separate the actual from the apparent, the extraordinary spectacular and gross results of agriculture from its *real net gains* during that period of its forced existence, it is impossible to believe that there were no greater net gains attending the other industries of the nation during this period of exceptional activity.

It should be specially noted, also, that during this period much more than half of the population of the nation was directly engaged in agricultural

pursuits and wholly dependent upon them. We will therefore pass to a consideration of a great problem, and note some of the direct effects upon the non-agricultural interests and industries of the nation specially traceable to the phenomenal expansion of the cultivated lands of our country during the last half-century. In the analysis of statistical matters and facts we now proceed to make, we will regard the non-agricultural elements of the nation as synonymous with the urban; since the line of demarcation, in the very nature of their respective pursuits, methods, customs, and modes of life, between the purely agricultural and non-agricultural classes of the nation is such as to give to the latter distinct and essentially urban characteristics. That portion of the non-agricultural elements of the nation that does not reside in incorporated towns, and may not thus possess, in its fulness, metropolitan traits of life, is as to numbers and wealth so inconsiderable as not to invalidate to a material degree the deductions we may make on the basis that the whole non-agricultural elements of the nation may be properly included within the sphere of the urban.

We have given the decennial growth of wealth in the larger field of agricultural industry from 1850 to 1900; we will now in a like manner give,

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from the same sources, that of the non-agricultural or urban portion of the nation for the same period. We find that during the decade from 1850 to 1860, the urban portion of our country increased in wealth from 3170 millions of dollars in 1850 to 8090 millions in 1860. We cannot fail to note that in 1850 the wealth of the two great classes of industries—the complete accumulation of the industrial energies of the nation up to that time—was respectively for the agricultural classes 3987 millions of dollars, and for the urban 3170 millions, or nearly one billion dollars more for the former than for the latter. This is what might be reasonably presumed from the co-ordinate relation they sustain in the country's economic and industrial affairs, and when there had as yet existed no measures to unfairly enhance one interest over the other.

It is in the increase of the decade from 1850 to 1860 that we can first trace the rudiments of an influence which subsequently produced that extraordinary unequal distribution of wealth that is revealed, by statistics, as existing in our country at the beginning of the present century. In the decade from 1860 to 1870, the urban wealth increased from 8090 millions of dollars to 21,060 millions, a net increase of thirteen thousand millions of dollars, in contrast with about one

thousand millions of dollars increase of agricultural values during that decade. It may be proper here to note, that of the vast expenditures of war in this decade, colossal sums went to the cities to meet its necessary and special requirements, and which operated to directly promote the interests and prosperity peculiar to urban life. From 1870 to 1880, the increase of urban wealth was from 21,060 millions to 30,462 millions of dollars, or a net increase of 9402 millions of dollars for that decade, as against some three thousand millions' increase of agricultural wealth during the same time. In the decade from 1880 to 1890 the urban increase was from 30,462 millions to 49,037 millions of dollars, or a net gain of 18,575 millions as against an agricultural increase of less than four thousand millions of dollars during that decade. Finally, from 1890 to 1900, the increase in the wealth of the urban element was from 49,037 millions to 68,000 millions of dollars, being a net urban or non-agricultural gain of almost 19,000 millions of dollars for this decade, as against an increase of 4500 millions in agricultural values during this same time.

By a further segregation of these remarkable figures, their significance can be more fully and clearly realized, if that were possible. First, we find that

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in a total increase of wealth in the entire nation from 16,169 millions of dollars in 1860 to 88,527 millions in 1900, a total net increase of 72,358 millions, the net increase of agricultural values for this period was 12,547 millions of dollars, about one sixth of the whole, while the increase in the urban or non-agricultural wealth during the same period was 59,811 millions of dollars, or nearly five sixths of the total increased wealth of the nation, or 47,264 millions of dollars excess over the increase of the agricultural element in that time.

It must be further observed that, of the final total of the nation's wealth in 1900, the urban or lesser element of the nation succeeded in amassing over three quarters of it, leaving less than one quarter of the whole as a reward for the labors of the far more numerous agricultural classes. The very important and significant fact in this connection should be here pointed out, that of the great multitude of millionaires, and multimillionaires, that so suddenly sprang into existence in our country during the past fifty years, it would be difficult, if indeed possible, to find even one who developed from that class whose efforts were confined to the tillage of the soil, and who acquired their wealth through the prac-

tice and exercise of those methods and processes of a nature strictly and peculiarly agricultural.

A distribution of wealth so manifestly contrary to all natural, just, and harmonious relations, and so obviously due to artificial causes, demands a serious attempt to trace an adequate explanation. To those familiar with the respective industrial habits and capacities of the rural and urban classes, it is insufficient to impute this difference to any superiority of the urban over the rural classes, who have ever exercised their art with the highest intelligence and assiduous industry.

Let us again address ourselves to the statistical data at command, as we believe a candid and careful analysis of them will disclose a satisfactory solution of that disparity not suspected by the uninterested many, and the causes of which are too remote and deeply hidden to encourage the analytic labors of the interested few.

As we have given the development of agricultural operations through the decades of 1850 to 1900, we will in a like manner give that of the industries innate and peculiar to the urban state of life. In stating the records of manufacturing industry, we do so for the reason that it is one peculiarly the product of, and cognate with, the

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urban condition of man; and it is a branch of urban industry concerning which alone there are reliable and sufficient statistical data, and for the reason also that it is directly and indirectly largely the cause of the marked unequal distribution of wealth in our country. Great as is the power of this industry to promote an unequal flow of wealth into the urban centres of the nation, it must be remembered that there are many other gainful pursuits that are exercised wholly in the cities which, with others only partially so, together contribute to that colossal urban fabric, the unequal dimensions of which a thorough study of statistics alone can reveal.

In stating the decennial increase in value of manufactured products, we will endeavor to give parallel therewith the annual and decennial average gross value of agricultural products also, in so far as statistical data will permit, in order that the great disparity of the two may stand more conspicuously revealed.

In 1850 the value of manufactured products was one thousand millions of dollars, and in 1860 over 1885 millions. Again we find that in 1850 the manufacturing interests bore to the agricultural, as revealed by the gross value of the products, the same relation as was indicated



by the respective shares in the total wealth of the nation of these two sources of national wealth, being what might properly be anticipated from the equal conditions enjoyed by both up to that time. The gain in value of manufactured products in the decade from 1850 to 1860 displayed, as was the case in the comparative increase of wealth of the two in that decade, the same evidence of that incipient unnatural expansion of the urban over the agricultural interest of the country, that was to ultimately assume such gigantic proportions.

Presumably owing to the disturbances and destructions of the Civil War, there is a lacuna from 1860 to 1880, in which the decennial increase of agricultural products has been given in such incomplete form as to render an accurate comparison of the two quite impossible. However, the growth in value of manufactured products is given in much detail and with great accuracy. We find that from 1860 to 1870 the annual gross value of manufactured products increased from 1885 millions of dollars to 4252 millions, a net gain for that decade of 2367 millions of dollars. From 1870 to 1880 there was an increase from 4252 to 5600 millions of dollars or a net gain of 1348 millions. From 1880 to 1890 there was an

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increase from 5600 millions to 9572 millions of dollars, or a net gain during that time of 3972 millions of dollars; and from 1890 to 1900 there was an increase in value of manufactured products from 9572 millions to 13,200 millions, a net gain during that decade of 3628 millions of dollars. This gives a decennial average increase in annual values of manufactured products of 2829 millions of dollars from 1860 to 1900, while the decennial increase of total gross values of all agricultural products did not exceed one third of that amount, although their quantity had increased in a rapid and startling manner during that time.

In 1880 there begin again accurate returns of agricultural products, from which we observe there was an average annual total of 3800 millions of dollars. It therefore appears that the decennial increased value of manufactured products from 1880 to 1900 was over half the average total gross annual value of all agricultural products during that period. As inferentially there should be reflected in the various forms of our national life evidences of so extraordinary a difference in the accumulations of the two great sources of national wealth, we will turn to a consideration of this question in another aspect, which not only confirms

this unequal distribution of the nation's products, but also suggests in some specific manner the true cause of it.

It might rightly be expected that a gain of wealth of one great branch of industry over the other, so rapid and marked, would be followed by an equal increase in the numbers of that class acquiring such unequal proportion. A study of the increase of the urban population in our country, subsequent to 1860, fully meets this expectation. Following a natural course of development and growth prior to 1860, the nation's increased wealth and population being then determined only by the laws of thrift, capacity, industry, and merit, and not as it almost wholly was after 1860 to adventitious circumstances and factitious causes, there was a relative development of the urban and rural elements of the nation in accord with these natural conditions. Accordingly, it is observed that the purely urban population, which in 1850 was only twelve and one half per cent. of the total, increased to over forty-seven per cent. of the whole population in 1900.

As indicating the relative growth of the urban and rural elements of our country under the normal and also under the artificial conditions that prevailed before and after 1860, it is sufficient

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to note that prior to that date, in the period from 1820 to 1860, the average urban population was nine and one half per cent. of that of the whole nation; and from 1860 to 1900 it was an average of twenty-five and one half per cent. of the whole, or nearly three times as much. Further, from 1880 to 1900, a period coincident with the most rapid accumulation of urban wealth and conversely that of the relative smallest gains of agriculture, the average urban population was thirty per cent. of the total of the nation. In 1830 the entire population of the towns and cities was one million two hundred and fifty-three thousand, and in 1860 it was seven millions six hundred and eight thousand, or a net gain during that time of six millions three hundred and fifty-five thousand. As the total increase of population in those thirty years was eighteen millions five hundred and seventy thousand, it will be seen that about one third of the total increase of population went to the towns and cities, and this was during a period in which natural productive conditions prevailed.

In 1870 all the towns and cities of the United States contained a population of eleven millions seven hundred and fifty thousand. In 1900 they contained thirty-five millions eight hundred and

forty thousand. This represents an urban increase of *twenty-four millions and ninety thousand* during this thirty-year period. As the total increase of population in the United States during this time was thirty-seven millions seven hundred and forty-five thousand, it will be observed that of the entire increase nearly two thirds went to the towns and cities. In fact, in one decade, from 1890 to 1900, nearly three quarters of the total increase went into the non-agricultural portion of the country. This, it must be specially noted, was a thirty-year period in which the influence of artificial conditions most powerfully operated to inordinately enhance the gains of the urban classes on the one hand, and unduly repress those of the agricultural or rural on the other hand.

There were in the United States in 1900 one hundred and sixty-one towns with a population of twenty-five thousand and upward, with an aggregate of twenty millions, or about twenty-six per cent. of the total population; and three hundred and fifty-six towns and cities above eight thousand and under twenty-five thousand, with a total of five millions of inhabitants; and five hundred and thirty-two towns and cities with a population of four thousand and under eight thousand, with an aggregate of three millions; also two thousand one

hundred and thirty towns with a population over one thousand and under four thousand that totalled three millions three hundred and four thousand inhabitants. Finally, there were six thousand eight hundred and ten towns under one thousand inhabitants, with a total population of three millions one hundred thousand. Thus, for the whole country, there were nearly ten thousand towns and villages in 1900, with an aggregate of thirty-four millions four hundred and four thousand, or over forty-five per cent. of the whole population of the nation.

Recurring to our comments upon the natural division of the total population of our country into what is strictly agricultural or rural, and into the non-agricultural or urban classes, it will be observed that these figures confirm the justness of the views we there presented. As more fully elucidating this important question of division and concentration of a nation's population into the prime sections of the rural and the urban, which we have heretofore considered in their naturally segregated state in France, we will again refer to the statistics of that country, which may be taken as an example of the complete development of all the industries comprised within a nation.

We find that in 1900, there were in France fifteen towns and cities with a population of over one hundred thousand, with an aggregate of five millions three hundred thousand inhabitants, and fifty-six towns and cities over fifty thousand inhabitants and under one hundred thousand with a total of two millions seven hundred thousand population. There were also thirty-five thousand five hundred towns and communes with a population of under one thousand and an aggregate of nineteen millions five hundred thousand inhabitants. As the total agricultural population of France in 1900 was twenty-three millions one hundred thousand, it will be seen how almost wholly that population lives in the small communes and villages, and how small a proportion resides in the towns of larger size. Turning to our own country, we find that in the six thousand eight hundred and ten towns and villages of less than one thousand inhabitants, there was a total of three millions one hundred thousand population, indicating that a very small per cent. of our agricultural people resides in villages or towns. It should be noted that the population in the cities of France of over four thousand inhabitants constitutes twenty-six per cent. of the total population of that nation, while

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that of the cities of the same size in our own country comprises thirty-seven per cent. of the whole.



## XV

### PROPORTIONATE GROWTH OF RURAL AND URBAN LIFE

THE urban population of our country, through the causes we have set forth, was enabled to attain wealth of such dimensions and proportions as to be in harmony neither with that attained by the rural element, nor with what could have been reached by any just legislative measures, had there not existed the unusual physical conditions that marked the agricultural lands of the Trans-Mississippi region, and which needed only the impetus of discriminating laws to accelerate a development and growth, not only disastrous to the agriculturists themselves, but unprecedented in the history of husbandry.

We have seen that, in the decade between 1850 and 1860, a period measurably free from the influence of class legislation and wherein only natural limitations to the progress of reclaiming

lands from a state of nature existed, there was an increase of twenty-four millions of acres of cultivated lands east of the Mississippi River. In this estimate, we have eliminated the prairie lands of Illinois and Southern Wisconsin as being exceptional to the characteristic growth of cultivated lands that prevailed in our country anterior to the time its prairie and plain regions were reached. Add to this the increased acreage of cultivated lands per decade due to a progressive increase of total population, and we have a thoroughly accurate criterion of what the rate of expansion would have been under the assumption that the physical impedimenta west of the Mississippi River had remained uniform with what previously had existed east of it.

By this rate of progression, it is evident that a far longer lapse of time would have been consumed in reclaiming the total area of cultivated lands that were under tillage at the beginning of this century than was actually required. In the case assumed, there would have existed also that natural relation and adjustment of the rural and urban interests and classes existing in the years prior to 1860. None other could have been possible, since both these prime sections in the general economy of the nation, being so

intimately and innately related, were reciprocally dependent upon mutual and helpful support for their expansion and growth. There could, as a consequence, arise no radical relation other than that which uniformly existed in the history of the country from its foundation to the beginning of that period of abnormal and rapid expansion of agriculture, rendered primarily possible only by the conjunction of fortuitous circumstances and the most unequal legislation.

Primarily considered, our country found itself at the beginning of this century in that anomalous position where the urban population, wealth, and economic power were such that more than a century of further development would have been essential to create under natural conditions and just laws; and, at the same time, the agriculture of the nation, as a body, was in a less favorable state than it would have been, at the end of the last century, as respects its wealth and share in the general economic affairs of the nation, had those exceptional conditions of its growth never been encountered. As respects the political power of the agricultural contingent of the people, it had become greatly inferior at the beginning of this century to what it would have been under a natural and impartial course of expansion, and to what

*in reality it was before* the beginning of the Civil War, which ushered in that era of rapid growth and power which ultimately ended in the complete political dominance now exercised by the urban element of the nation.

/ But what of the future, and what is, in fact, the *real* problem that confronts our nation with its stern demands for solution? The urban element of the nation having in numbers, wealth, and power anticipated by more than one hundred years a just co-ordinate development with agriculture, is it not the real problem, how this forced and artificial condition of the nation's urban classes can be sustained without its further serious detriment to agricultural rights and to the true interest of the state? It seems that it is indispensable to do so, in the interests of an ultimate and essential harmony; at least until such time as the internal growth in numbers, wealth, and power of agriculture is restored to a condition that is commensurate with its importance in the affairs of the nation, and such as is necessary to insure steady and enduring prosperity to the *whole body* of industrial interests.

But it must be apparent to you that this readjustment is necessarily a work of time, with its slow progress and processes. It would appear

that in only three ways can it be effected: either by a more rapid and a larger ratio in the growth of agricultural wealth as a whole than now exists, or by a reduced future ratio of gain in the urban interests of the nation, or through a third—but well-nigh impossible—method, that of maintaining an economic relation of urban interests with other nations such as will redress the deficiency arising out of those of a domestic nature. The cities having thus, by the aid of partial laws, anticipated for more than a century their full inheritance of the nation's possible wealth for that time, their one sole effort and concern, therefore, in future must be, how a volume of wealth so unequally distributed can be maintained until the belated agricultural interests advance to that state of coequal wealth and power which will re-establish once more that harmony of interest which can alone guarantee a *sound, permanent, and real* national prosperity.

Whatever uncertainty and doubt there exist as to what may be an efficient policy or policies whereby this equilibrium can ultimately be restored, there can be none that there must be an increase in the one, or a decrease in the other, or a concurrence of both; or else, as we have noted, the vastly overweighted volume of urban affairs

must be sustained through industrial influences, wholly extraneous to those of a domestic character, until such time as rural rights and acquisitions expand to a normal and just relation with the urban, upon which the permanence and future prosperity of both must depend. The latter remedy seems well-nigh impracticable in anything like a just, natural, and sufficient measure; since, in this age of national spheres of influence, with ever increasing and keener competition in the world's commerce, the trade if justly secured will be at too great a cost to be other than a feeble corrective of that wide disparity in home interests, the product of deep-seated and unnatural influences.

There seems, therefore, only one resource remaining by which this flagrant divergence in material interests can be maintained, and that is, to perpetuate the discriminating system that has existed for half a century, whereby an undue share of the nation's increased wealth will continue to be diverted from natural channels to the urban advantage. There seems no alternative whereby, through factitious methods and laws, those of nature can be further frustrated. Even this, in the end, must become inefficient and finally inoperative; since all efforts of man that are vicious in character or at

variance and in conflict with the order of nature are self-destructive.

As the very principle of discriminating advantages implies a continuous and steady absorption and appropriation of the substance and resources of one industrial section by another, there must be a progressive decrease in the strength of the one comparable with the excessive growth and abnormal accumulation of the other. A steady and ultimate emasculation must result to the resources of the one upon which the other must rely to maintain its artificial and preponderating position.

We have seen that in forty years' operation of the measures and policies that caused the excessive enrichment of the cities at the expense of rural rights and interests, the latter class was deprived of a large share of its rightful gain. The inquiry naturally suggests itself as to how many years may yet intervene before the urban classes have absorbed the remaining portion, and the rural element be thus reduced to a state of permanent subordination, in which the fruits of their labor, above the bare necessities of their subsistence, will pass to the sole benefit and enjoyment of the nation's urban classes. Nor can it be rightly held that this is an idle speculative inquiry, since we

find that it is the uniform testimony of history that agriculture in all nations, in time, becomes subordinate to the urban element, resulting inevitably in the decline and decay of the nation.

It must be manifest to you that there exists in our country no possible future rate of agricultural expansion such as prevailed during the past half-century, and out of which grew the inordinate development, power, wealth, and numbers of the urban classes. There can, therefore, exist in the future no commensurate means of maintaining this inequality in the distribution of the nation's wealth, that had its origin in and was sustained by purely exceptional (and in their nature transitory) conditions which can no longer be perpetuated; for it is evident that no like rapid accession to the growth of our agriculture as was maintained in the past half-century is again possible. Without the vital influence of such a fertilizing stream, the exaggerated and inordinate state which it created and sustained can no longer exist.

Even though another period of excessive agricultural expansion could recur, so long as those measures remained in force that enabled the urban classes to secure unequal advantages over the rural, the same relative disparity of the two would continue to exist as heretofore, and thus the same



dangerous inequilibrium of economical affairs would be perpetuated. We thus see that no adequate or effective substitute can be found in any external resources, and only a feeble relief can be expected from a natural internal expansion of our agriculture.

To what remedy alone are we, therefore, driven to restore that just relation of the two capital elements of our national economy, upon which the integrity and stability of the whole depends? The remedy is obvious, and approved by nature. Sweep away those legislative measures and fiscal agencies that essentially operate to produce an unnatural distribution of the nation's varied products, and let the diffusion of the fruits of the nation's increase be a *natural* and *equable* one.

It is evident, however, that this imports a relaxation of the urban hold on the political power and wealth of the nation, and a steady concession to the rural element; in fact, it involves in principle a restitution, through the unobstructed operation of nature's laws, of that which has been acquired through a long violation of them. Herein lies the crux of the whole perplexed question. As in the totality of her operations it is the trend of nature ever towards conserving changes, we may look for a corrective at her hands for disorders that

have been wrought in her harmony by the impatient and impotent efforts of men to hasten her processes, by diverting and misdirecting her laws from general to specific purposes and results. As it is a renunciation quite beyond what can be reasonably expected of mankind, that they should voluntarily yield to others even an unfair acquisition, nature can therefore supply the only adequate corrective.

In a general advance of industrial affairs in our country, we have seen that, after having for centuries followed natural or co-ordinate lines of development, there were suddenly interposed policies and methods that promoted special interests at the expense of the general good and advantage. This policy was abetted by laws of a special character, the discriminating nature of which was rendered effective for their special purposes *only* by casual conditions and circumstances.

It was the occasion of our Civil War that gave that predominance to the urban section of our country which promoted the enactment of measures so distinctly in their own favor, and so directly unfavorable to the rural element of the nation. So partial a dispensation of laws would have been quite impossible among a people so largely agri-

cultural had the mind of the nation been in repose, or at least not under the eclipse of internecine distractions. Yet even in their enactment they would have failed of their full power to create special advantages had there not been present those phenomenal conditions for a possible rapid agricultural expansion that we have pointed out, and that gave a practicable application to those measures, whereby were realized those remarkable results not fully anticipated even by those classes in whose special favor they were created.

To what extraordinary extent these laws favoring the urban as against the rural classes operated to draw the fruits of productive industries throughout the nation into the cities, we have shown with sufficient statistical support. We will now point out how the even balance of cause and effect, everywhere displayed in the operation of natural laws, eventually rises superior to the ordinances of man when not in accord with them.

No economic law is more deeply grounded, or its effects more constantly manifest, than that the flow and determination of capital in a given direction is in direct proportion to the assurance of profitable returns upon it. In whatsoever manner we may choose to view it, those measures that both directly and indirectly had their origin in our

unfortunate civil conflict powerfully operated (when the special necessities of that conflict ended) to greatly favor those industries connate with the urban state of mankind, and as adversely to those of the great rural classes of the nation. As a direct consequence, they drew both the capital and population of the one towards the other, through the increased, artificial, and dominant financial, economic, and social attracting forces centred in the cities, the principle of which lay in those measures that enhanced the one through the depression of the other. So constant and distinct has been this ebb of the rural element towards the artificially stimulated urban centres, that it has already awakened the solicitude and alarm alike of the social and political student of our country, and has visibly loomed with gravest portents to the moral well-being of the people, and even to the tranquillity of the state.

As a marked result of this diversion of the natural course of diffusion and processes of distribution, through intervening ordinances of man, we have shown the wide disparity in a concentration of capital and wealth in the lesser urban element of the nation in striking contrast with that of the vastly larger rural portion of it since the passage of those measures specifically favoring

the one class over the other. In this connection, it must be recalled that statistics show that, prior to these discriminating laws, both the rural and urban sections of the country were in their material and general advancement *pari passu*, on lines parallel with the importance of the respective positions they held in the civic and industrial spheres of the nation.

It must distinctly be remembered, also, that this unequal distribution could have been effected only through the excessive growth of agriculture and its products, and could have continued only as long as this excess prevailed; and the one must, in the very nature of the situation, have reached its zenith when the other had attained its full altitude. To all those who have been in a position to acquire, and have availed themselves of their opportunities to form, a correct opinion of this great question, it must be apparent that the noontide of abnormal agricultural growth has been reached,—in fact, has already passed. With this, also, the other has necessarily marked the climax of its abnormal expansion.

Mark how truly, in its ultimate results, nature restores an infallible harmony of all her parts. In virtue of the sudden and remarkable glut of the world's food products during the last decades of

the previous century, from causes which we have hitherto given *in extenso*, there was a corresponding accession to its population through a well-known law of human increase; and there has been reached, concurrently, a condition of pressing consumptive demand on the one hand, and a relatively insufficient supply on the other.

To any one familiar with the subject, it is apparent that the food supply of *our country* can in future increase only in that ratio which prevailed prior to the era when abnormal production set in, and during which the low tide of prices was reached through a stifling superabundance. A general higher level of agricultural prices and values is therefore inevitable,—in fact is now upon us, as could have been expected. Having at last returned to the true and normal conditions of agriculture, *are we not simply in like manner returning, as a natural consequence, to its normal prices also?*

To those in the habit of careful reflection on this subject, it is equally manifest that the *world at large* has permanently entered upon an indefinite period of steady advance in agricultural prices and values, now that a larger total population forms a greater basis for increased yearly demand. As this supply can no longer be aided or stimulated by

adventitious circumstances to the same extent as in the past half-century, it will tend less and less towards meeting in a commensurate manner the increase of a demand that is under no limitation of a like nature, and therefore this demand must ever press more heavily upon supply.

On the other hand, the supply of the urban commodities will tend towards a greater and greater excess, with a lower range of prices and values as a result. Having been largely the product of transitory conditions and artificial measures and influences, it can no longer be in accord with the *normal* conditions to which agricultural production has *again returned*, after the long period in which it was subject to the cyclonic sweep of unnatural causes. It is on this battlefield of the contending forces of an unequal increase of demand and supply that a future conflict is to be waged, that may cause a drastic readjustment of values and population, with disturbances, and even convulsions, in the whole field of industry such as may shake the very foundations of our nation's economic structure.

A return of the urban element of the country, both as to wealth and population, to a *normal, just, and stable* relation to the rural seems inevitable, since it is of nature's order. This of a necessity

must ensue from the very force of economic laws, which in the end will supersede and triumph over the desires and efforts of the urban element to avert and avoid. We have seen how statistics disclose an astounding difference between the accumulated wealth and current gains of the rural and urban classes respectively, the one being far below, and the other as much in excess of, what should have been obtained, had they been left solely to the directive force of normal conditions and just laws. Through the restorative action, therefore, of natural conditions a rapid and continued reversal of a situation, long forcibly maintained, seems destined to ensue. In the very nature of agricultural affairs, they must in the end be fixed and limited by natural barriers, while those of an urban nature are bounded only by the will and ambition of man.

A limited supply of the one with an ever increasing and pressing demand upon it, together with an ever increasing *over supply* of the other with a resultant lessening of prices, will cause a continued rise in those of agriculture, with a *greater assured prosperity*, and at the same time a downward tendency in prices and values of urban products. The result is obvious; for with increased and increasing values in the one, and a



correlative decrease in the other, the agricultural field will give *surer* promise of greater and more ample rewards to capital and labor than that of the overweighted and surcharged urban industries.

Thus there will ensue a continuous flow of capital and labor, from that of the less to the more profitable field of industry, which will endure until the unnatural surplus of the one is depleted and transferred to redress the deficiency of the other, and until that just proportion of the two great branches of the national industry is again restored, bringing once more a stable and harmonious condition to the whole body of the nation's industrial activities such as, *let it be hoped*, will never again be disturbed. This in essence is, as you will observe, but nature's final assertion of her dominion over misdirected human action, re-establishing that equilibrium temporarily and seriously disturbed by man, which resulted in a far less final aggregate of beneficial results than if he had been content to permit her operations to flow undisturbed, as they ultimately and inevitably will in despite of all contrary human efforts, with undeviating regularity and harmony.

In the array of statistical matters we have presented with their valid inferences, deductions, and legitimate conclusions, it has been our purpose to

point out how, through the instrumentality of laws that deflect distribution from its legitimate and natural channels, an undue share of the nation's increased wealth may be diverted to the direct benefit and advantage of specially favored interests and classes. When this class is the urban, and therefore the less numerous one, this excess of wealth is to be deplored, as it becomes a distinct menace to the tranquillity and even the stability of the state; since in virtue of the very constitution of mankind in his collective and concentrated form, a plethora of wealth becomes in an intensified degree a vice-generating power, radiating its influence throughout the whole social and political body of the nation.

While we do not believe that, in principle, any law can be approved the spirit of which operates to divert an undue share of the nation's wealth to the distinct advantage of a special class or interest, it must, however, appear to the impartial mind that were the influence of such laws directed to the special benefit of the rural rather than of the urban classes, the sum of their evil influences would be far less in the former case than in the latter. The reasons are obvious, as not only are the constituent units in their diffused form of rural life less conducive, by reactive influences, to engender

through inordinate wealth multiplied forms of vice, but they do not possess that facility for their wide and ready diffusion throughout the whole body of the people, such as is peculiar to the urban condition of mankind.

The truth, succinctly stated, is that during the past fifty years, urged on by the pressure of an impatient and false spirit of progress, we have in a manner dissipated the fairest agricultural patrimony ever received by man from the bounteous hand of nature, and (as is the wont of the improvident) we now find ourselves, at a time when abundance should prevail, in the midst of an increasing scarcity. Had our nation been content to make haste more slowly, the rich treasures of our vast agricultural domain would not have been recklessly unlocked and scattered broadcast in such a profligate manner; but they would have been prudently hoarded so that at the same time the tillers of the soil would have received, in return, a *full, fair, and just* reward for their labor, in a co-equal share of the nation's various products.

It is true that we would not be able to contemplate, as we now do, as our chief reward for this improvidence, the outward display of urban brilliance, with its internal leaden and dismal

realities; but on the other hand we could contemplate a rural condition so rich in the fulness of a completed and contented life, that no fatal allurements of a seething urban life would cast its shadow over the fair scene, to disturb the tranquillity and perfect contentment that always dwells and reigns in the hearts and minds of a truly prosperous and happy husbandry.

More than this, our cities would not be surcharged with that welter of a threatening and turbulent indigence which ever attends on an overstimulated metropolitan life, and whose constant cry for "bread and amusement" sends its ominous and sinister thrill throughout the length and breadth of the nation. Even more than all, our country would find itself still possessed of a vast untouched domain, whose nascent treasures and resources would supply, for generations to come, a sure safeguard against the dangers and perils that ever lie in the pressure of a redundant urban populace.

## XVI

### THE REIGN OF CHANCE

**A** GAIN reverting to the many contributive agencies we have heretofore considered, whereby the urban classes are enabled to draw from the whole field of productive energies a disproportionate share of labor's rewards, we see that the power to, at will, direct and control the ebb and flow of the nation's prime forces of production and exchange to their own immediate and unwarranted advantages, becomes more than all others the most potent in its centralizing tendencies.

It is, however, impossible not to believe that those material agencies projecting everywhere from the urban centres, penetrating in their minute ramifications the very depths of the nation's moral and material substance, have not, along with their great concentrating power, the equal one also of radiating the accumulated forces thus centralized within them. With an ever

increasing multiplicity and efficiency of those instruments of absorption and diffusion, it is manifest that the urban centres will more and more impress their salient characteristics upon the entire social and material body of the nation. Whether this is to be more to the ultimate weal or woe of the whole people depends solely upon whether, in their innate tendencies, there is a greater trend towards virtue or vice in mankind, in his collective state in cities, than in the more diffused form of rural life. History once more teaches that it is the uniform experience of the human family, from the ancient to the modern Babylon, that the cities (especially the larger ones) have grown no less the congenial home of vice.

Considering the almost magic power the cities now command to disseminate with extreme facility their peculiar vices, as well as virtues, throughout the whole social body, one may well feel deep concern at the possible state to which man may yet be reduced, when it is remembered that he is prone to yield rather to the promptings of his selfish passions, than to the guidance of conscience and reason.

It seems to have become a fixed distemper of the human mind to look upon *chance* as a charm to securely and freely conjure with; as though fate

stood ever ready to bestow what nature is equally loth to grant. To what fateful lengths may this conceit yet carry man, now that in his worship of this fickle goddess he need no longer seek her mystic shrine, since her altar is everywhere brought, with all its allurements, into his very presence? Thus, while we are listening supinely to our accustomed homilies from the pulpit on the evils and dangers of gaming, we incautiously permit the poisonous roots of a *greater Monte Carlo* to silently and insidiously penetrate into the sacred precincts of every household in the land.

When we consider in what manifold forms its influence is even now manifest in all human affairs, the danger becomes apparent that the *chance and hazard taking habit* may yet develop into the dominant and ruling propensity of mankind. Already those miraculous agencies in the hands of the cities, that destroy alike space and time, are visibly instilling the virus of their many evil customs and methods into the various industries diffused throughout the nation, hitherto exempt from them. Even now, the entire rural element of the country is being closely and intimately linked to the *chance-taking centres* of the nation. It is therefore, even at the present time, no unusual circumstance for the farmer to leave

his plough in the furrow, and with it his honest labor, and repair to the well-installed telephone in his own home, to enjoy the thrill of a venture in the wheat pit of Chicago or the stock market of New York. And who can doubt what the final result will, uniformly, be to these votaries of *chance*? As in the indulgence of all things evil in nature, every gratification only quickens the appetite and stimulates desire, we may yet see agriculture, the noblest and least tainted pursuit of man, reduced to the incongruous medley of honest *creative effort and speculative venture*. The daily routine of the farmer's life may thus ultimately become a round of rapid alternations between the *ticker* and the *plough*.

To fully realize the far-reaching danger of this fatal facility, we need only to point out that, wide as the intervening distance may now be that separates the chance-takers and the centres wherein the chance-taking propensity is indulged, they are, in fact, even nearer and more intimately connected therewith than even their forefathers were, who dwelt in the cities where these *dangerous foci* are centred.

And why not, for does not this condition in no small measure even now actually exist in many other branches of trade and industry throughout



the country? And where will the ultimate gains, that flow in countless affluent streams, find their final cumulative centre but in the cities?

Thus the absorptive powers, together with an equal measure of radiating influences, that the cities have ever specially possessed, become in these modern times reinforced to an inordinate degree. Even in the simple and homogeneous conditions of national life, a conflict between the rural and urban has ever been a disturbing force inimical to the security of the state, uniformly ending in the ultimate dominance and disastrous influence of the latter.

As the same vices and passions as of old still sway mankind, how can we view the multiform instruments of intenser and more intimate interaction, working in a more direct and also insidious manner, in any other light than as distinctly tending in an equal measure to hasten that catastrophe awaiting all nations in which the urban becomes the ruling influence and power? This seems inevitable, since the many modern and beneficent instruments for furthering human action, so salutary in their moderate and wisely directed use, become, in the reverse order of their merit, vehicles productive of most disastrous consequences in their perverted form.

The problem long confronting mankind, as to what extent rural life and conditions could be subordinated to the urban, consistent with national security and stability, has become in these *rapid days* an even more urgent and pressing one.

It is to the assiduous attention and zealous care to maintain inviolable the predominance and purity of rural affairs and institutions, that China mainly owes that racial vitality and national strength which has enabled her to survive all other civilizations through historic times, and still to preserve such reserve force as may cause her yet to outlive many nations possessing a greater brilliance of what now seems to be a higher and more advanced civilization. Agriculture in that country has ever been the overwhelming pursuit and held in the most honorable esteem, city building and urban life being merely incidental to it. That is but to say, there was sustained throughout her history a just mutuality of all her industrial interests and pursuits, which alone can secure their perpetuity as a sound and healthy whole. There has never been a "Hodge" or "Hayseed" in the annals of her agriculture, which has ever been animated and ennobled by royal example.

What may be the transformation in her indus-

trial life and system by the adoption of the many modern instruments for facilitating and amplifying human activities, remains to be seen. No doubt, in little time enough, there will develop centres arrayed in all thoroughness with the most approved tentacular appliances, whereby large districts shall be sapped and drained of their accumulated substance and resources, occasionally to their benefit, but only too often to their detriment and lasting injury.

That they will grow and thrive in a country so industrially constituted and ethically based as China, with the rapidity and to the extent that some would fain believe, is most improbable. The quietude and the purer and simpler conditions and influences of rural life and agricultural pursuits, impressing this people for countless ages, have imparted to the whole nation a firmness and tenacity of moral, intellectual, and industrial texture and fibre, as well as an *inertia*, which will repel the intrusion, into her long and well co-ordinated body of civic and political institutions, of any new force not strictly in consonance with the concurrent rights and benefits of all.

The innate conviction of the Chinese people that a national autonomy, a civic integrity, and an efficient political system can be maintained only

through vigilantly preserving intact that relation of all her internal forces and factors which evolved from a slow and steady development through ages of wisely directed experience, is manifest in the universal dislike of her people to subject themselves to the possible dangers of foreign influence. The close and firmly co-ordinated body of her productive energies, giving her such superior advantages over other nations whose material economic forces are in such a highly tense, confused, and unbalanced state, will tend (the more this superiority is recognized) to confirm the conviction in the minds of her statesmen that it is necessary to safeguard and maintain the integrity of her long-established and well-tried civic and political institutions.

The full force of these advantages in the world's industries will only be fully realized when China comes to believe that a more complete national development is compatible only with more general and intimate external relations. How far other nations will find it to their advantage to permit an increased relation with that country will be determined by the fact, that China will ever have far more to offer than to receive from the outer world. However great may be the tendency among other nations to restrict the growth of

this "intercommunion" of trade, the distinct economic benefits to be realized by the world, through China's superior industrial methods and economies in production, will insure to the latter a large volume of foreign trade. As the character of this trade will be more of a non-agricultural than an agricultural bearing and nature, it will tend to favor more the urban than the rural element of China, and thus in some measure disturb the long and well-established proportion and harmony between them.

So overwhelming, however, will the rural and agricultural body and sentiment always remain in China, that it will be impracticable to secure through discriminating laws any marked advantage for the urban over the rural class, by levying any serious contribution upon the affairs of the latter, in favor of the former, thus creating an undeserved power and influence of the one at the expense of the other, such as is witnessed in those nations where there is a reckless disregard of mutual rights, and where nature's processes are wantonly violated.

Through purely industrial causes, therefore, no radical derangement or obstruction is likely to occur in the well-established order of her economic affairs, such as exist in other countries with their

political, financial, and civic disorders. The only serious peril to China (one that is common to all) is to be found in the incautious adoption, widespread distribution, and use of those multiform instruments of concentration and diffusion which, along with those of beneficial use, are certain to include that dangerous one, also, which converges upon urban centres the whole *chance-taking* propensity existing throughout the nation,—for it must be admitted that this fateful proclivity is no less a trait of these people than of humanity in general.

As this, with all evil propensities, grows with every indulgence, China may in due time, as is now the case in other nations, find that through an infinite and widespread series of sapping agencies, spreading to her remotest confines, a large share not only of the current gains of her people, but much of her fixed wealth also, will be drawn into the urban centres of the nation. Has it not already become a momentous question, and of deepest concern to all who do not believe in the factitious order of things, as to how much of wealth's natural increase is to be left to those who *create* it, and how much, by the insidious perennial action of this *endless chain of chance*, is to be carried to the purely manipulated centres of the

nation? Nay, even a more vital question may be asked,—whether all trade and business affairs of a nation may not ultimately be so resolved that they may yet be placed in the common melting-pot of pure *chance*, the alchemic mysteries of which are to be presided over and wholly directed by the cities?

It can easily be imagined the measure of condemnation that would fall upon any method or purpose that, in the name of trade and progress, should cause to be transfused, through widely ramifying channels, the virus of infectious disease throughout a nation. Yet from this cause the physical body of the people would suffer no more than would its moral body through the corrupting virus of *chance-taking*, poured in contaminating streams through tiny filaments whose intricate network pierces the innermost recesses and even the very moral marrow, as it were, of the nation itself.

Thus much for the forecast of a danger that menaces China—although no more than other nations—through the magic power of the “*miracle-working*” instruments of man, which from common radiating centres can penetrate into the very heart and soul of a nation, extracting and depleting the best of its substance, and largely instilling

in return the demoralizing influences of these centres.

It seems that it must be self-evident to you that, in virtue of an innate capacity inhering in its collective form, mankind in towns and cities acquires such an unequal ascendancy in the political and economic affairs of a nation as to ultimately become a menace to the stability of the state,—a power that is both hastened and enhanced, in these times, by the special agencies of a "*strenuous civilization*." Does not war itself, that last fell calamity of mankind, become a source of wealth and a direct and specific cause of an abnormal growth and prosperity of cities? How powerfully may its influence operate to that end can be realized when it is considered that the civilized nations, during recent years, have expended from one to two billions of dollars annually in their preparations for war, and to preserve peace. Recent authorities place this expenditure, during the past half century, at over sixty billions of dollars.

In this age of Dreadnoughts, the records of these nations teem with a wearisome array of budgetary details relating to preparatory measures for warfare. This is especially true as to their naval budgets and those appertaining to improved



equipments of the army, all of which tend to create and promote industries and interests that are essentially peculiar to the urban state of life. So momentous have these preparations and expenditures become that it naturally suggests the reflection, that they may in future be largely relied upon as one of the chief means to create what may seem to be desirable industrial interests and activities. When it is further noted that the armaments and armies are themselves usually assembled in times of peace in the towns and cities, it becomes evident that the far larger part of these colossal expenditures to put the nations in readiness for war inures to the benefit of the urban element, and that, of the vast and perennial disbursements, the rural element receives little, if any, compensative advantages.

Is not the reflection here naturally suggested as to what may have been the influence of our own Civil War in shaping the relation of the agricultural and non-agricultural sections of our country as they now stand displayed? Of the myriad of millions expended in that war by the government, in a brief period of time, to meet its requisite expenses, much the larger part obviously operated to directly create and promote those industries and interests that pertain and are natural to

the urban element of the nation. In this, along with other influences arising out of the prevailing military condition, may we not discover the initial cause of that rapid growth and enrichment of the cities which ensued thereafter, and which formed the distinctive feature of the development of our country in the past half-century?

Here let the philanthropist, the statesman, and the political economist compare, deliberate, and determine.

It must be equally apparent to you, that those modern aids that amplify human effort and action, and which in a limited and reasonable exercise produce the greatest benefits to mankind, can become even in a greater degree instruments of injury, leaving in the affairs of man an adverse balance in the totality of their influence and effects. Nor, as we believe, can it escape your attention that, in the aggregate of their beneficial or evil influences, a vastly preponderating portion is wielded to the direct advantage or to the injury of the towns and cities.

As even in the more primitive and less complex forms of human society there has ever existed the innate tendency of the urban to subordinate to its own advantage the rural element of the people, it is evident that the power to do so has

been vastly augmented by the factitious aids placed almost wholly at the command and under the control of the cities, in these modern times, with their involved conditions of human life.

To those who hold the belief that the safety and stability of a nation can be maintained only through sustaining a just communion of all its essential parts, and *especially* the *purity* of *rural life*, does it not seem an ever increasing and pressing necessity that the agrarian rights and powers of a people should be ever more vigilantly safeguarded, by holding urban aggression and power under salutary restraints, and thereby placing them both on the same common and enduring basis of equity?

It is thus that even a brief and rapid inquiry into the chief causes of the rise and fall of Rome may become important; as the cycle of her comprehensive and completed life furnishes an object-lesson to the world, the varied example of which may point many a useful moral, and from whose wide and diverse experience may be deduced a more or less complete solution of important problems that yet needlessly vex mankind.

















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